

**CHISHTIS DURING THE DELHI  
SULTANATE: A BALANCE BETWEEN IDEAL  
AND PRACTICE**

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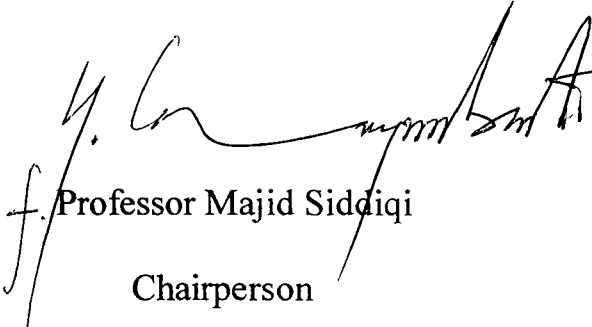


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### Certificate

Certified that the thesis entitled “Chishtis during the Delhi Sultanate: A Balance between Ideal and Practice”, submitted by Fatima Hussain, is an original work and has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other University. We recommend that the thesis be presented before the examiners for consideration of the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
Professor Harbans Mukhia  
Supervisor

  
Professor Majid Siddiqi  
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## PREFACE

I had, in the course of my work for the M.Phil. degree of JNU some seven years ago, explored some aspects of the history of Sufism in medieval India and was keen to pursue the theme for my doctoral research as well. To allow myself wide space for further exploration, I chose the topic “Chishtis during the Delhi Sultanate: A Balance between Ideal and Practice.” However as I proceeded with the work, it came to acquire a more defined focus, i.e., the Sufis’, especially the Chishtis’ relationship with the state during the period of the Delhi Sultanate. I wished to alter the title of the thesis accordingly to bring it in tune with the main contents of the text, when JNU’s administrative regulations stopped me in my tracks. I was given the option of making the alteration but waiting for a whole year before it could be submitted or submitting it under the title I had chosen earlier and explaining my dilemma to my examiners. I have taken the second option in hope and faith in the examiners’ generosity.

Sufi ideals, especially those of Chishtis, prohibited the Sufis from engaging in any measure of proximity with the Sultanate, but in practice, it was difficult to keep away from the Sultanate altogether. There had been an inherent linkage between the two institutions, which I have tried to analyse, generating my data from various anecdotes from the primary sources. The drift of argument in this work is that the Sufis’ relationship with the Sultanate



cannot be defined in linear terms either of distance, or cooperation or conflict, as has been done by a number of very eminent practitioners of the discipline of history earlier. The relationship indeed was one that was complex, with space for distance, cooperation and incompatibility - all the three aspects existing independently as well as inter-dependently, at times in tension with one another, at others in perfect harmony. The complementarity of the relationship between the two is as well marked as their exclusiveness.

My supervisor, Prof. Harbans Mukhia's suggestion to deal with the relationship between the Sufis and the Sultanate as complex rather than linear set me out on this path. I am at a loss of words to express my gratitude to him for chanelising the flow of this work in this direction, and also for his encouragement, affection and for fulfilling the demands that I made on his time despite his busy schedule as Rector. It was a great privilege working with him, as I have been enriched in more ways than one due to my association with him. My special thanks to Mrs. Banani Mukhia for her patience and warmth of her hospitality and Neelanjana for sharing her knowledge of Sociology and lending me her copy of *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*.

The research work is based mainly on number of primary sources, specially contemporary Persian works including *Tarikh-i FiruzShahi* of Barani, *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*, *Siyar al-Auliya*, *Akhbar al-Akhyar* etc. Dr. Sadiq Hussain, Lecturer of Persian, School of Foreign Languages in the

Ministry of Defence and Dr. Mazhar ul-Haq of Hamdard University helped me in translating the Persian works. My father Dr. Farid Ali Shamsi gifted me a copy of the *Quran* with English translation, while my mother Naseem Farid gave me a copy of *Khair al-Majalis*. Dr. Abdul Qayyum helped in works relating to Urdu and arranged a typist for Persian work. Major C.M.S. Babu and Mr. Mansoor Alam helped me in editing the photographs of the *Dargahs*. Mrs Kapur of C.H. S./J.N.U. was extremely encouraging and helpful. Dr. Sunil Kumar of Delhi University, where I was a student until the Master's degree, had stimulated my interest in Sufism and Dr. M.L. Bhatia also of the same University lent me his copy of '*Comprehensive Persian and English Dictionary*' of F. Steingas, respectively. I discussed the subject with Dr Muzaffar Alam, JNU (now in Chicago) who made some spirited comments. I extend my gratitude to all of them.

I am thankful to the *khadims*, Kabir Nizami of *Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, Shams al-Haq of *Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and Fazlul Matin and Syed Sarwar Chishti, Gen Secy., Anjuman Syedzadgan, *Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Muin-al Din Chishti for their oral anecdotes and lending rare books from their personal collections. I thank Kusum Sharma and all my students in Maitreyi College and Miranda House and specially my friends Dr. Lata Singh, Dr. Ranjana Bhattacharya and Dr. Shama Mitra Chenoy for being beacons in my moments

of need. Their emotional support was soothing in times of distress. I also thank my friends Shefalika Dalmia, Humra Quraishi and Simi Qasim and Dr. Amita Chauhan, Chairperson, Amity International for spurring me on.

I began my journey with History in L.S.R. from where I graduated. I extend my gratitude to all my teachers and Dr. M. Gopinathan, Principal of the College for their positive influence on me in shaping my career.

I also remember with gratitude my friends and colleagues Shashi Munjal, Dr. Saroj Gandhi, Anita Sud, Dr. Sudha Tyagi, Dr. Gargi Chakrabarty, Dr. Premlata, Ritu Kumar, Yogam Datta, and Dr. Vishnu Priya of Maitreyi College for their affection and enlightening me on issues which had eluded me earlier. I am grateful to my colleagues at Miranda House - Nonica Dutta, Jhunu Deb, Snigdha Singh, Madhu, Shrimanjari, specially Prabha Dikshit for filling my professional life with strength and support. I am also touched by the kindness and encouragement of Dr. S. Suneja, Principal of Miranda House.

Bilal and Dr. Khusro, my unfailingly supportive brothers also helped me, the former by getting important materials from AMU and the latter by sharing his knowledge and books on Islam. My sister Asra, a student of journalism in London encouraged me throughout.

Most of all, my 12 years old son, Asad, helped me in corrections on the computer, transferring the typed Persian material from Inpage to the

Corel draw and then shifting those to the Adobe Page maker. The formatting, scanning and printing the photographs was also done by him with the help of Mr. Mansoor Alam, son of Prof. Mahmood Alam, Professor of Persian at JNU. I am completing this work on 15 Nov 2002 i.e. on the birthday of my son and am dedicating this to him as a token of my affection. My little daughter Sarah often dozed off to sleep at the foot of the table without complaining, still hoping that I would tell her a bed time story after I wound off my work. I remember my husband who has been with me to the libraries, *dargahs* including that of Ajmer and to the museums. I am touched by their help and do not intend to belittle their contributions and relationship with me by thanking them. I treasure their contributions in my heart.

I thank the librarians of J.N.U., I.C.H.R., Jamia Hamdard, Delhi University, Jamia Milia Islamia, Aligarh Muslim University, Osmania University, National Archives and Nehru Memorial Libraries and all the *khadims* of *Dargah Sharifs* and staff members of Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad and Iran Culture House for their help and encouragement.

Finally, I thank I.C.H.R. and its officials for evaluating and finding my research work of worth and sanctioning a generous grant for it.

  
Fatima Hussain

## INTRODUCTION

Islam preaches that God is the ultimate Reality. Sufism is an offshoot of Islamic philosophy and advocates that a true Sufi should see God and God alone. Since its inception Sufism underwent various stages of development with its philosophy and practices evolving through the ages. Sufism reached India much before the establishment of the Delhi sultanate, but it became popular with the advent of the Chishti order of Sufism. Khwaja Abu Ishaq Shani Chishti founded the Chishti order of Sufism, while it was Muin al-Din Chishti who introduced the Chishti order in India.

Like all other *silsilahs*, the Chishti *silsilah* had also certain distinct ideals. Ideally the Chishtis were supposed to keep away from the Sultanate unlike their Suhrawardi counter parts. They were also to give up worldly pleasures and accept *faqr*. In practice, however, the Chishtis could not keep completely away from the Sultanate. They had direct or indirect interaction with the Sultanate; they often accepted *futuh* and grants from the Sultanate. The early Chishtis lived in abject poverty, but later, the Chishti *khanqahs* provided delicious food to the inmates and guests. Thus the Chishti ideals and practices make an interesting study. They attempted to balance between the ideals and practices, especially in their relationship with the Sultanate.

As regards the Sufi ideals and practices, especially that of the Chishtis,

there are some notable works by eminent scholars. But there have not been much deliberation on the balancing of those ideals and practices to suit the specific requirement of the time, especially in regard to the Sufis' relationship with the state. The present work attempts to look at the relationship of the Sufis<sup>1</sup> with the Sultanate in its entirety, as a complex whole and not as different parts isolated from each other. While, Prof. K.A. Nizami gives the normative mode of the relationship, with Sufis standing at a distance from the state<sup>2</sup>, at the opposite end of the spectrum is the thesis of Prof. Muzaffar Alam, who terms the Sufis as 'agents' or 'collaborators' of the state<sup>3</sup>. In between lies the scholastic work of Simon Digby, who considers the relationship in terms of conflict and cooperation<sup>4</sup>. The relationship was indeed a complex one and mere limiting it as 'conflict' or 'cooperation' or 'keeping away from each other' will be a simplistic approach to the problem. The relationship is to be looked at as a complex whole, wherein there is space for 'cooperation', 'distance' and 'incompatibility' between the Sufis and the state, each aspect existing not in isolation, but as part of a complex relationship, complementing each other.

Indeed, the accounts of the above said scholars have been very useful for giving us a better understanding of Sufi-Sultanate relationship and their propositions apparently look plausible, if perceived in isolation. However, this work has serious problem with the given models as template for describing the Sufi-Sultanate relation, whereby each model appears antithetical to the

other. The opposites often complement each other like man and woman, light and darkness, capitalists and workers and the like. One would be rendered meaningless without the existence of the other. Thus, the cooperation, incompatibility and distance between the Sufis and the Sultanate are parts of a whole complex of relationship, complementing each other. In reality, even when the Sufis seem to be at loggerheads with the state, they were providing implicit support to the state by recognizing the existence of it and working as a 'safety valve' in ventilating the grievances of the people, in their own peculiar way. Moreover, as a critical observer, one needs to delve into various shades of grey in between the notions that oppose each other. With this approach, this work attempts to go beyond and give a holistic argument to the issue by treating it as much more than the sum total of the parts – 'cooperation', 'incompatibility' and 'distance' between the Sufis and the Sultanate.

There are scores of writers having dealt with the Sufis. Some of the important works are by A.J. Arberry, R.A. Nicholson, W. Chittick, K.A. Nizami, S.A. Rizvi, Bruce B. Lawrence, Muzaffar Alam, Annemarie Schimmel and Carl Ernst etc. However, their works have been in bits and pieces in regard to Sufi-Sultanate relationship. Though indeed valuable, these are articles or chapters in their scholastic works. Thus, there is no comprehensive work by any writer, especially dedicated to the Sufi-Sultanate relationship. Almost all the important Sufis during the Sultanate period had

dealt with the state system, directly or indirectly. Even when they attempted to keep away from the Sultanate, it earmarked a relationship. Thus, it is imperative to focus on this aspect of study in a comprehensive way.

The primary sources which have been looked at are *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi* of Zia al-Din Barani, *Akhbar al-Akhyar* of Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddis Dehlawi, *Khashf al-Mahjub* of Shaikh Ali al-Hujwiri, *Qiwam al-Aqaid* of Mohammad Jamal Qiwam, *Siyar al-Auliya* of Mir Khwurd, *Siyar al-Arifin* of Shaikh Fazl Jamal Kambosh, *Tazkirat al-Auliya* of Farid al-Din Attar, *Tarikh-i Firishta or Gulshan-i Ibrahimi* of Firishta, *Kitab al-Luma* of Sarraj, *Awa'rif-ul Ma'arif* of Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, *Akbar Namah* of Abul Fazl, *Tabqata-i Nasiri* of Siraj Juzjani, *Ta'j al-Ma'sir* of Tajuddin Hasan Nizami, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* of Shams Siraj Afif, *Rihla* of Ibn Batuta, *Futuh al-Salatin* of Isami, *Khazain al-Futuh* of Amir Khusrau, *Futuhat-i Firuz Shai* of Firuzshah Tughlaq, *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi* by Yahya b. Ahmed Sarhandi, *Sarhe Khausos Al Hikam*, *Wajudul Ashiqin*, *Asmarul-Asrar* and *Tafsil-Quran* of Gisu Daraz.

The *malfuzat* are *Dalil Arafin* of Shaikh Muin al-Din Chisti attributed to have been compiled by Shaikh Qutab al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, *Fawa'id al-Salakin* of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki said to have been compiled by Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i-Shakar, *Rahat al-Qutub* of Baba Farid, whose compilation is attributed to Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*



of Nizam al-Din Auliya by Nizam al-Din Hasan Sanjani etc. Other *malfuzat* are *Ahsan al-Aqwal* of Shaikh Burhan al-Din Gharib by Hammad b. Imad Kashani, *Durar-i Nizami* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya by Ali Jandar, *Khair al-Majalis* of Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh Delhi by Hamid Qalandar, *Saroor al-Sudur* of Shaikh Hamid al-Din Nagouri by Shaikh Aziz and *Jawami al-Kalim* of Syed Gisu Daraz by Mohammad Akbar Hussaini. *Afzal al-Fuwaid*, a *malfuz* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya attributed to Amir Khusrau and *Asrar al-Auliya* of Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i-Shakar attributed to Shaikh Badr al-Din Ishaq, though, are rejected as spurious by Prof. Mohammad Habib<sup>5</sup>, are important to corroborate anecdotes in other primary sources. In addition, there are number of letters and *khilafat namahs*<sup>6</sup> ( خلافت نامہ ) that give deep insight on the subject. *Al-Quran* ( القرآن ), the holy book of Muslims, from which the Sufis claim to draw their origin and inspiration also has been selectively referred.

These primary sources need to be studied afresh to understand the intricacies of their relationship in correct perspective. These are full of anecdotes on the aspect of the Sufi-Sultanate relationship. A deeper and closer study focusing on this aspect only will give a clear picture showing that the relationship cannot be merely compartmentalized as a relationship of ‘conflict’ or ‘cooperation’. In fact, the term ‘conflict’ used by Simon Digby appears an unqualified one<sup>7</sup>, as ‘conflict’ inherently means ‘competitive or opposing

actions'. Therefore, instead, the term 'incompatibility' is used in this work, which indicates 'incapability of association or harmonious coexistence', which is vividly reflected in the relationship of the Sufis and the Sultanate. On the other hand, the term 'collaboration' or 'agents of the state' used by some scholars is on the other extreme, incapable of encompassing the subtle nuances in the relationship. The term 'incompatibility' and 'cooperation' have been considered appropriate in this present work in determining the relationship. The relationship reflects the existence of 'compatibility and cooperation', 'incompatibility' and 'distance' between the Sufis and the state, and is primarily based on issues in question, the attitude and position of the Sultans and the Sufis vis-à-vis each other, the strength and the character of the state system, the Sultan's rapport with the '*Ulama*'<sup>8</sup> ( علماء ) and the 'populace', which varied from time to time and from Sultan to Sultan. In addition, the location of the *khanqahs*<sup>9</sup> ( خانقاه ), the spiritual strength and the popularity of the Sufis, which were also in variation, played important roles in shaping the relationship. These aspects will be closely examined in this work.

The present work offers the promise of a systematic, comprehensive and coherent study of the relationship between the Sufis and the state as a whole, not just instances of it. It is necessary to take a fresh look at the Sufi-state relationship, recognizing the force of the existing views and incorporating their strengths, at the same time going beyond these to uncover traces of

contradiction, ambiguity and polysemy in various propositions in the relationship.

The opening chapter “Sufism : Philosophy and Practices” presents an extended picture of Sufism as a way of Islamic mystical life. The mystical way of life needs to be understood in the light of *Quranic* injunctions on the aspects and the origin of ‘Sufism’ as a way of life in the history of Islam.

The Sufis were considered holy people with prophetic qualities leading to emergence of the term ‘*Wallayah*’<sup>10</sup> ( ولاية ). The Sufis were called ‘*wali*’ and ‘*wali-Allah*’, who were much above ordinary human beings. A comparison set in between Prophethood i.e. ‘*Nabuwwa*’<sup>11</sup> ( نبوة ) and Sufihood i.e. ‘*Walayah*’ ( ولاية ). Popularly accepted difference was that the holy people who showed spiritual light to the people before Prophet Muhammad were called the Prophets and such people who were born after the Prophet were called ‘*Walis*’. Then the debate as to who is superior led to a controversy, as larger Islamic world, specially religious scholars would reject such a comparison outright, considering the Prophets far far above the ‘*Wallayah*’, as the former were God’s chosen persons for prophetic mission. But Sufi scholars like Gisu Daraz created a hornet nest by positioning the ‘*Walis*’ above the Prophets and basing the notion on logic and arguments. Much though he clarifies it as his ‘*wahm*’<sup>12</sup> ( وهم ), his contention was contested by his contemporary Sufi comrades. This will be looked into in

greater detail in the chapter.

Sufism can be best understood as a philosophy along with the study of practices of Sufism. Sufi practices can be broadly divided into practices as prescribed in the *Shari'a't*<sup>13</sup> (شریعت) and practices which are not defined or deliberated in the *Shari'a't*. The importance of *salah*<sup>14</sup> or *namaz* ( نماز ), *safa*<sup>15</sup> ( صفا ), *faqr*<sup>16</sup> ( فقر ), *zikr*<sup>17</sup> ( ذکر ), renunciation of worldly life etc. are cardinal practices followed by the Sufis and are within the ambit of the *Shari'a't*. The concept of the *pir-murid*<sup>18</sup> ( پیر مرید ) relationship, *wilayat*<sup>19</sup> ( ولایت ) i.e. spiritual territory of Sufis, *ziyarat*<sup>20</sup> ( زیارت ) i.e. visit to the shrines of the Sufi Shaikhs etc. are practices which do not originate in the *Shari'a't*. Similarly, the practice of *sama* also does not find sanction in the *Sharia't* and became not only a subject of controversy, but also a bone of contention between some Sufis and the Sultanate. The concept of such practices will be dealt with at length.

The chapter will also encompass various stations of spirituality, in the light of *tawba*<sup>21</sup> ( توبه ), *zuhd*<sup>22</sup> ( زهد ), *faqr* ( فقر ), *sabr*<sup>23</sup> ( صبر ), *tawakkul*<sup>24</sup> ( توکل ) and *reda*<sup>25</sup> ( رضا ). In the backdrop of these concepts and practices, it will be very important to analyse the stages of the development of Sufism. Broadly, Sufism went through three stages of development – *khanqah* ( خانقاه ) stage<sup>26</sup>, *tariqa* ( طریقه ) stage<sup>27</sup> and *taifa* ( طائفہ ) stage.<sup>28</sup> With the evolution of Sufism, there were changes in the concepts and practices

as well. For instance, *ziyarat* ( زيارت ) and *sama*<sup>29</sup> ( سماع ) became intrinsic parts of later Sufism. The concept of *urs*<sup>30</sup> ( عرس ) is also a later development. These also will be dealt with in this chapter.

The second chapter deals with the emergence and development of Sufism as a philosophy including the early Sufis, development of *silsilahs*<sup>31</sup> ( سلسلة ), various writings on Sufism during the early and the pre-medieval periods and advent of Islam and Sufism in India and inroads of various *silsilahs* on Indian soil. As regards the early Sufis, it will begin with Hasan of Basra (d.718 A.D.), who is considered the earliest Sufi and further deal with Ibrahim Adham (d.783 A.D.), Fudayl bin. Iyas (d. 801 A.D.), Rabia'a (d.801/802 A.D.), the first known woman Sufi, Ma'ruf al-Karkhi (d.815 A.D.) etc. Sufism as a philosophy further consolidated with the introduction of the theory of 'self realisation' introduced by Abu Abdullah al-Hanif (d.857 A.D.), 'theosophical mysticism' by Ibrahim Dhu'l-Nun of Egypt, 'doctrinal form of Sufism' by Abu Bayazid Bistami (d. 874 A.D.) with emphasis on pure love, 'unification with God' by Junnayd (d. 910 A.D.). The era of controversy on Sufism arose with Al- Hallaj's pronouncement of *Ana'al- Haqq*<sup>32</sup> ( انا الحق ) and propounding the theory of *fana*<sup>33</sup> ( فنا ) and oneness with God. By the close of the 10th century A.D., Sufism had further developed with Shibli's (d. 945 A.D.) description of 'state of gnosis', Abu Bakr Kalabadi's 'doctrine of *tawhid*'<sup>34</sup> ( توحيد ) and Abu Talib-al-Makki's 'doctrine of *sabr*' in his famous book *Qut*

*al-Qulub* (The Food of Hearts). The beginning of the 11th century witnessed revolution in Sufism with Abu Sa'id giving a different meaning to Sufism in his preaching, when he held that a Sufi should seek God in the hearts and in the midst of human beings. Much later, the concept of *wahadat al-wajud*<sup>35</sup> ( وحدة الوجود ) i.e. unity of being was developed by Ibn al-Arabi which was considered the very opposite of the concept of *tawhid* (unity of God) and a debate on the issue set in. This chapter will focus briefly on these aspects.

We will further deal with the advent of Islam and Sufism in India, Islam's landing through Persia, Sindh and Khyber pass, through the sea to the South and the early tombs of Sufis in Madras, Ceylon, Laccadive and Maldives. The entry of the Sufis and their struggle during the pre-Sultanate period, especially the advent of Shaikh Muin al-Din Chishti and scores of others subsequently, are important aspects of early medieval Indian history. Besides this, we will deal with the advent of various Sufi *silsilahs* and their spread in India. While dealing with the above we shall also focus on important writings of the Sufis and others on the concept and practices of the Sufis during the period.

The next chapter is entitled "Dynamics of Sufi Power", which deals with the process and factors leading to unbounded spiritual power of the Sufis. Among the factors, renunciation of worldly life endowed the Sufis with supra-normal powers. They used this power to heal the minds and hearts

of people. It is said that knowledge is power. Shaikhs had extensive knowledge of the *Quran* ( قرآن ), *Hadith*<sup>36</sup> ( حديث ), *fiqh*<sup>37</sup> ( فقه ) etc. which endowed them with deep religious insight and intuitive intelligence. The people were mesmerised and adored and admired them. Similarly, the Sufis except the *jalali*<sup>38</sup> ( جلالی ) ones were magnanimous, forgiving those who harmed them, and even praying for them. They were extremely pious and had great degree of morality. This provided them with moral authority over a wide area. Their unending services towards humanity, their distressed hearts and poverty brought them closer to the populace, who revered them immensely. Some of them showed miracles, bestowed kingship and some kept away from the Sultanate. Their power also stemmed from the institutional inertia of Sufism. All these factors and acts of Sufis endowed them with extraordinary spiritual power which they generally used towards the services of humanity. This chapter will dissect each of the factors responsible for making the Sufis as wielder of this power.

The study of Sufi-Sultanate relationship would be incomplete without reference to the *khanqah* or *jama'at khana*<sup>39</sup> ( جماعت خانه ) of the Sufis during the period, as *khanqah* played an important role in the discourse of power mechanism during the period. A chapter will be devoted to this, which will encompass the meaning of *khanqah*, their strategic locations vis-a-vis political nerve centres of the corresponding period, functions and hierarchy of power

structures within the *khanqahs*, its inmates, resources to maintain the kitchen and hospitality at the *khanqah*. As the *khanqah* life revolved around the Shaikh, it would be of great importance to study the Shaikh's position and functioning in the *khanqah*. The *Khanqahs* had become great learning centres and hence mention of their role as an academy during the period is also important. The *khanqahs* also helped the process of urbanisation during the period. These aspects will be discussed in the chapter.

The most delicate issue is to study the pattern of 'cooperation' and 'incompatibility' in the relationship between the Sufis and the Sultans. One chapter is devoted to each of these. The strategic location of the *khanqahs* made it imperative that a relationship - direct and indirect one existed between the two institutions. The chapter on cooperation reflects through numerous anecdotes from primary sources, especially Barani's *Tarikh-i Fiuruz Shahi*, *Akhbar al-Akhyar* and *Siyar al-Auliya* etc., the Sufis' support and blessings for the Sultanate. Beginning with Shaikh Muin al-Din's prophecy of Pithaura's defeat at the hands of army of Islam and his taking favour from the Sultanate in protecting the land of his sons, it also narrates Shaikh Qutub al-Din's appreciation of Sultan Iltutmish's regime, Baba Farid's blessings to Sultan Nasir al-Din and Prince Ulugh Khan, Sultan Ala al-Din seeking help from Shaikh Nizam al-Din in his southern campaign, his sons Khizr Khan and Sadi Khan becoming disciples of the Shaikh, the faith of the Sultan's wife



and nephew in the Shaikh, Amir Khusrau, the courtiers' discipleship of the Shaikh, Mohammad bin Tughlaq's reverence for the Shaikh, Sufis taking up government services and accepting *futuh* from the Sultanate, disciples of the Shaikh in the service of the Sultanate, bestowal of kingship by the Shaikhs, the Shaikh's counselling to the rebels to obey the Sultan, the Shaikh's blessing in the military campaigns and sending their disciples to accompany the military campaign etc will be dealt with at length. It will be observed from the study of this chapter that while the Shaikhs, from time to time, commented upon good or bad governance, they generally had implicit support for the Sultanate.

The relationship of incompatibility between the Sufis and the Sultanate is dealt with in a separate chapter. It encompasses an extensive study of serious issues where the Sufis and the Sultans took divergent views. Most of the incompatibilities centered on the Sufi practices which were not spelt out by the *Shari'at* (شریعت). The concept of '*wilayat*' (ولاية) in Sufism, demarcated the spiritual domain of the respective Shaikhs, over which they exercised their moral and spiritual authority. This amounted to infringement or interference in the sovereignty of the Sultanate. Political theorists consider that there are four elements of the State - population, territory, government and sovereignty. The system of '*wilayat*' in Sufism was antagonistic to the theory of sovereignty of the medieval state system. The spiritual domain of the Sufis rendered the concept of absolute sovereignty of the state

meaningless. Their moral and spiritual bearing made the general public's allegiance divisible. They showed their allegiance to the state due to coercive authority of the state, while their heart lay with the Shaikhs. Thus, incompatibilities were inevitable. However, it fell far short of a 'conflict', as there was no attempt on the part of Sufis to compel or ask the devotees for their allegiance to them. Such allegiances were purely voluntary.

The chapter is full of anecdotes examining the incidences of incompatibilities between the leading Sufis and the Sultans during the period. There are anecdotes revealing that due to their antagonism towards the Sufis, certain Sultans were doomed, not merely to lose their kingdom, but also their life. The details include Shaikh Muin al-Din's incompatibility with Prithviraj, Shaikh Qutub al-Din's rectification of an unjust execution by bringing back the victim to life, Sufis' resistance to obeying the Sultanate's unjust decrees, killing of Saiyidi Maula, a leading Sufi in the presence of a Sultan, prosecuting or threat to the *amirs* who were disciples of the Shaikh, spying at *khanqahs*, the Sultan's displeasure on the functioning of the *khanqahs* and his helplessness, debates on *sama* ( سماع ), the Shaikh's blunt advices to the Sultans when they were wrong and the Sultan's annoyance with *amirs* or officials who were devotees of the Shaikhs. Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq's ill treatment towards the Sufis is another important aspect which began with shifting of capital to Daulatabad. Besides all these, unquestionable faith of

Princes and courtiers towards the Shaikhs also will be dealt with at length.

Finally, the Sufi's role in the recognition of Sultanate in the non-Muslim dominated Indian society, which is a much neglected but an important aspect of the study will be analysed. This is of prime importance, as the Sultanate in its formative stage sought much needed recognition, which could not have been obtained from the *Khalifa* ( خليفه ) or *Ulama* ( علماء ), as India was a non-Muslim dominated country. It was the Sufis, who brought some dignity and respect for Islam by their piety, morality and selfless services. Thus, Islam found acceptability and with this the Sultanate was also slowly and steadily accepted by the populace. The support of the Sufis towards the Sultanate played a vital role in the recognition of the Sultanate. Even when they were at loggerhead with the Sultanate, indirectly it recognised the existence of the Sultanate as the most powerful political institution in the early medieval period.

While analysing the Sufi-state relationship, it would be prudent to move beyond the confines of verbal communication between the two. For, meaning also resides so strongly and pervasively in a multiplicity of non-verbal and behavioural codes, where often actions and intentions contradict words.

Studies have been made on the subject of the Sufi-Sultanate relationship in bits and pieces. However, there is no comprehensive study on this, even though writers specially of the primary sources while dealing with the leading Sufis of the period have invariably made mention of incidences relating to

their interactions with or utterances on the Sultanate. Writers have written articles or devoted small chapters in their books on this subject and taken one-sided views - some attributing close proximity of the institutions and some projecting them at either loggerheads or at a distance from each other. These views ignore the subtle nuances and grey areas in the relationship. This simplistic approach amounts to straitjacketing the Sufi-state relations into rigid, water tight compartment, with a propensity to be tendentious. In fact, the overall picture will reveal that the relationship was need and issue based, besides being heavily dependent upon the personalities of the respective Sufis and Sultans and their perceptions of each other. Political stability of the Sultanate and its relationship with the *Ulama* also had an impact on shaping the relationship. It varied from one Sultan to another and from one Sufi to another vis-a-vis each other. This study will make intensive and extensive examination of these aspects, while taking the dimension of 'cooperation', 'incompatibility' and 'distance' between the two institutions as intrinsic, inter-related and complementary parts of the 'complex relationship in its entirety'.

## NOTES

1. The mystic or esoteric in Islam, who acquires mastery over the science of knowledge of God; Sufi doctrines and methods are mainly derived from the *Quran* and Islamic revelations; the subsequent chapter "Sufism: Philosophy and Practices" deals with its meaning in detail; cf., Huston Smith, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, Stacey International, London, 1989, p.295.
2. K.A. Nizami, "Early Indo-Muslim Mystics and their Attitude Towards the State", *Islamic Culture*, Vol.22, 1948, pp.387-98.
3. Muzaffar Alam, "Competition and Coexistence; Indo Muslim Interaction in Medieval North India", *Itenerario*, XIII, 1, 1989, pp.37-59.
4. Simon Digby, "The Sufi Shaykh and the Sultan: A Conflict of Claims to Authority in Medieval India, *Iran* (Journal of Persian Studies) Vol. XXVIII, 1990, pp.71-81.
5. Mohammad Habib, "Chishti Mystic Records of the Sultanate period," *Medieval India Quarterly*, 1, 1950, pp.1-42.
6. Derived from word '*Khalifa*' which means 'successor', 'viceroy', 'substitute'; cf., *Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit.; *khilafatnama* means 'letter of authority' or 'certificate' indicating succession or viceroyship.
7. Simon Digby, "The Sufi Shaykh and the Sultan: A Conflict of Claims to Authority in Medieval India, *Iran* (Journal of Persian Studies), Vol.XXVIII, 1990, pp.71-81.
8. Plural of '*Alim*'; 'learned', 'savant'; Those, who are recognized as scholars or authorities of religious sciences, namely *Imams* of important mosques, judges, teachers etc. in the Islamic religious faculties, see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.407.
9. Persian name for place of dwelling of Sufis or *derweshes*; its origin, meaning and connotations have been given in the Chapter, "Structure and Functions of the Sufi *Khanqah*: A Power Centre with Multi-Dimensional Role".

10. Derived from word '*Wali*' (pl. '*Auliya*') referring to Islamic saints; also referred as '*Wali-Allah*' or 'friend of God'.
11. Prophethood; derived from word '*Nabi*' which means, a Prophet who prophesies within the existing revelations (It is different from a '*Rasul*' or a Messenger, who brings a new revelation); see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.95.
12. 'Imagination'; 'perception'; aspect or matter seen from one's own angle.
13. Derived from the root '*shara'a*', meaning to 'introduce', to 'enact' or to 'prescribe'; *Shari'ah* means the canonical Law of Islam as put forth in the Holy *Quran* and the *Sunnah*; see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.361.
14. Lit. 'prayer', 'worship'; pl. '*salawat*'; It consists of series of recitation and movements; the performance of the *salah* five prescribed times is obligatory; the Sufis, in addition to these prayers, perform rigorous optional prayers (*nawafil*); see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.345.
15. Purity; both physical and spiritual.
16. In the context of mysticism, this is the virtue of spiritual poverty, detachment and an emptiness making way for God's presence; it was a great spiritual virtue of the Prophet in relation to God; among the mystics *faqr* is the central virtue, emblematic of all the virtues. *Quran* states; 'And surely Remembrance of God (*zikr*) is the greatest (*wa la zikru-lilahi akbar*)' (29:45). However, Sufis say: "There is no *zikr* without *faqr*." Jesus says in Mathew 5:3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for there is the Kingdom of Heaven"; also refer to *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.121.
17. Remembrance of God; *Quran* often speaks of *zikr* as an act of worship; "Remember me; I (God) will remember you (*fa'zkuruni azkurkum*) (2:152). For the Sufis, *zikr* is the spiritual method of concentration, the invocation of a divine name or a sacred formula, under the spiritual direction of a spiritual master of particular *silsilah*; see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.97.
18. *Pir* means Shaikh and *Murid* means the disciple; '*Pir*' or '*Peer*'

refers to a spiritual master, a teacher or *murshid* from Turkey to India, and is used in 'preference' to or as a 'substitute' to Arabic word *Shaikh* (*Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.317); *Murid* lit. means one who is desirous of spiritual realization, generally used in Sufi order for a disciple, (*Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit. p.288); *Pir-Murid* relationship indicates the relationship between a Sufi saint and his disciple.

19. Spiritual domain of a 'Sufi', corresponding to political domain of a 'Sultan' or a 'King'.
20. A visit to the tomb of the Prophet in Medina; The word is also used for the visit to the tombs of saints as appropriate for meditation and seeking God's grace (here the word is used in this sense); refer to *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.484.
21. Lit. "turning"; conversion to the truth, change of heart and also repentances, refer to *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.400.
22. Lit "asceticism"; renunciations of ease and comfort in the name of religious discipline in order to detach the soul from the world; an ascetic is called '*zahid*'; This is a mystical attitude, sourcing from the Prophet who fasted for long and prayed in the middle of the night, for long hours.
23. Patience; *Quran* reveals that "God is with those who have patience (*Innallaha Ma'as Sabirina*)".
24. The virtue of trust, reliance on God, expressed in numerous *Quranic* sayings such as: "Whosoever puts his trust in God, He shall Suffice him". (*Quran*-65:3); see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.399.
25. Satisfaction; containment.
26. A Persian word derived from '*khan*' and '*gah*', meaning place and table respectively, indicates place of dwelling of *derweshes*; *khanqah* stage is the initial stage of Sufism, immediately after the early Sufis and lasted from around 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. to 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and marked by absence of rituals, and intermediary role of Shaikhs between God and his pupils; a great deal of original literature on Sufi philosophy was produced during this stage and considered the 'golden age' of Sufism.


27. Lit. "path"; a generic term referring to the doctrines and methods of mystic union; *Tariqa* indicates tracing their authority through their *silsilahs* to the Prophet; see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.397. *Tariqa* stage is the second stage in the development of Sufism beginning from around 12<sup>th</sup> century to 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D., marked by emergence and development of Sufi *silsilahs*, rituals and surrender of '*murids*' before the '*Pir*'.
  
28. Lit. "cult association"; *Taifa* stage began in 15<sup>th</sup> century and witnessed veneration of saints, saints being referred to as '*walis*' or '*friends of God*', spiritual intermediary between the disciples and God and popularity of concept of '*baraka*' or '*spiritual power*' which could be transmitted etc.
  
29. Lit. means '*hearing*' or '*distening to*'; Sufi way to reach ecstasy by listening to recitation or presentation (in rhythm) of verses or couplets by professionals (e.g. *qawwals*), with or without music; *qawwali* probably has emerged out of this; This was a subject of controversy between the '*Ulama*' and the Sufis during the Sultanate period.
  
30. Annual fair celebrated on the date of *wisal* (union with God; death) of a Sufi marked by procession, *qawwali*, offerings of '*chadar*', '*langar*' and prayer. In Sufism the date of death is important and is referred to instead of date of birth with reference to a Sufi.
  
31. Originated from '*salasala*', "to concatenate", 'interlink', a 'chain', 'series'; In Sufism, the initiatic chain of transmission of a Divine '*baraka*' ('blessing'), see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., 1989, p.371.
  
32. Blends words '*ana*'-and '*al-Haqq*'; *ana* (Arabic word) means 'I' or 'me' and *al-Haqq* means 'Truth' or 'Reality'; The proclaimer of '*Ana'al Haqq*' holds that he is the 'Truth' or 'Reality' (Truth or Reality relates to God); thus, the pronouncement *Ana'al-Haqq* had led to a fierce controversy.
  
33. Lit. 'annihilation'; it indicates self annihilation i.e. removing own existence to facilitate oneness with God; The Sufis believe that with the divine grace (obtained by deep prayer and meditation of God), the corruptible elements of one's soul fades away, and this stage is called *fana*; the remainder which is beyond appearance is called *baqa*.



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34. 'Tawhid' means to make or to declare or to acknowledge oneness; The concept of *tawhid* in spiritual term means 'Unity of Godhood' as against plurality of 'Godhood'; This originates from *Quranic* verses: "*Qul Huwallaho-ahad, Allahus samad, lam yalid, walam yulad, walam yakul-lahu kufowan-ahad*", which means 'God is One and Alone and He has neither a father nor any son.'
35. Derived from words *wahada* ('*Ahad*', '*Wahid*' etc.) meaning 'One' or 'Alone' and '*wajud*' meaning 'existence' or 'being'; '*Wahadat al-wajud*' means 'Unity of Being' i.e. opposed to the concept of *Tawhid* i.e. 'Unity of God'. For details refer to Ibn-Arabi's concept of '*wahada tul wajud*' in *Kashf al-Mahjoob* and *Tazkirat al-Auliya*.
36. Lit. 'speech'; 'report' or account; refers specifically to tradition relating to the deeds and adherences of Prophet Mohammad; see *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, op.cit., p.141.
37. 'Law'; refers to Islamic laws or jurisprudence based on Quranic injunction, *Hadith*, *sunnah* etc.
38. Derived from '*jalal*' which means majestic or terrible.
39. Place of dwelling for Chishti Shaikhs; the word *jama'at* means community and '*khana*' means 'place of dwelling'; thus, *jama'at khana* is a dwelling place for Chishtis where they lived, slept, prayed and had their belongings (bed, 'rosary', '*musallah*' or '*ja'namaz*' or prayer carpet etc.) together, without distinctions.



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## SUFISM : PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICES

Sufism signifies Islamic mysticism. It is an Islamic way of reaching God, which involves rigorous meditation and prayer, emphasis on inner self rather than external rituals, continuous service towards humanity and renunciation of the worldly pleasures. In Islamic world, it is popularly known as '*Tasawwuf*', while Western writers have termed it as 'Islamic mysticism'.

The genesis of Sufism lies in the *Quran* itself which reveals, "God is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward."<sup>1</sup> It also reveals, "Wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah."<sup>2</sup> (This is not to be confused with shape or figure). Here the emphasis is God alone and everything else is perishable and of no worth. Therefore, Shibli states that Sufis are those who do not see anything other than Allah in both the worlds.<sup>3</sup>

The Sufis imitate and derive inspiration from Prophet Mohammad in terms of morality, piety and religiosity. The Sufis, because of their mystical knowledge and experience, could understand the sayings of the Prophet correctly. Therefore, Sarraj writes that 'God reveals the truth behind the language of *Quran* to those whom He loves and who are true Sufis'.<sup>4</sup>

There exist conflicting theories regarding the origin of the term 'Sufi' and that of Sufism as a socio-religious and philosophical movement. Al-Hujwiri while dealing with its origin states:<sup>5</sup>

“While one group contends that it emerged from the word ‘*suf*’ which means woolen cloth and logically who wear the same are called Sufis; another group contends that it is related to ‘*suffa*’ and those who were in first rank i.e. ‘*saffa-i awwal*’ in following the Prophet and led ascetic life were Sufis. There is a third group who relate this to a mountain called ‘Safa’ in Mecca. Al- Beruni contends that the word ‘Sufi’ is derived from the Greek word *sophia* meaning wisdom or policy.”

The author of *Ghiyyathul-Lughat* says that *suffa* was the name of a tribe of Arabs, who at the time of ignorance i.e. prior to the birth of Islam, separated themselves from their people and engaged in the service of the Meccan temple. However, the majority of the scholars including Thomas Arnold, Alfred Guillaume, R.N. Nicholson, A.J. Arberry believe that the word Sufi is derived from *suf* meaning wool, because the Sufis used to wear garments made of coarse wool. In fact, a great number of Sufis themselves confessed that the name of their class had a very prosaic and humble origin; a Sufi was a man who wore clothes of *suf* or wool. Incidentally, woolen cloth in those days was worn by the poor people of Iraq. Al-Hujwri, after analyzing various theories of the origin of the term, finally states that ‘*suff*’ indicates ‘wearing of woolen clothes’ and ‘hiding’.

From the early Arabic and Persian sources, it is apparent that Sufism is a distinctive way of life, which did not come into being immediately after

Prophet Muhammad, though its genesis lies in the *Quran*; rather, it emerged slowly as a means for seeking salvation through intensive devotion to the commands of God and absorption in the words of God revealed in Quran with superlative degree of purity. Early Sufi authorities acknowledge that the term 'Sufi' was not in general use before the time of Abu Hashim al- Sufi, though some assert that the term was known to early Muslim religious figures such as Hasan al-Basri (d. 728 A.D.) and Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 778 A.D.).

One group of scholars attributes it to the influence exercised on Islam by other faiths, while others emphasize the essentially Islamic origin of Sufism. There are several theories suggesting that Sufism was derived from Neoplatonic, Christian, Buddhist or Hindu sources. Islam prohibited its adherents from practicing the mortifying austerity and asceticism, which were followed by Jewish and Christian monks and Hindu *Yogis*. However, though external influences on Sufism cannot be denied, the speculative and the mystical qualities of Sufism originated within Islam and developed within its own frame of reference. The influence of other faiths on Sufism was not mechanical, but a sophisticated appropriation of metaphysical concepts to mystical experience. Such for instance is incorporation of celibacy by certain Sufis. Sufism, it may be stressed, therefore is neither a separate religion nor a sect; it is a particular and distinctive Muslim way of life born of the human heart against the cold formalism and hair-splitting ideology of the

institutionalised Islamic orthodoxy. Therefore, it is most important to study Sufism in its practical aspect in which sense it was an organized activity based on certain attitudes, feelings and practices employed by the Sufis.

Prophet Mohammad is considered the last Prophet in Islam. Before him number of Prophets were born including Abraham, Noah, Moses, Jesus etc. After the death of the last Prophet holy people with prophetic qualities needed to be addressed with some nomenclature apart from prophet' or 'man'. They were not ordinary human beings. Thus the concept of '*walayah*' came into being.

*Walayah* is saintship attributed to the Sufi saints. Shaikh Nizam al-Din had discussed the concept of saintship in a general way. Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh also discussed about saintship but not in detail.<sup>8</sup> Gisu-Daraz, who is considered the successor of Shaikh Nasir al-Din, discussed the problem elaborately. He seems influenced by the thoughts of Ibn al-Arabi and holds saintship superior to prophethood at some instances. However, this 'misadventurous' thought of his has been rejected and rebuffed by many. He expressed his thought through a letter to an eminent Chisthi saint of the age, Shaikh Mas'ud Bak (d.1397- 98 A.D.). Mas'ud Bak in his reply said that holding a saint higher than a Prophet, merely on supposition that a saint is closer to God than a Prophet due to his indulgence with the creation or *khalq*, is *kufir* (blasphemy) as per unanimous agreement between the saints and

*Ulama.*<sup>9</sup>

Gisudaraz himself paradoxically considers his thought as *wahm* i.e. fantasy and different from *asliyat* (reality).<sup>10</sup> Earlier Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. 3rd century A.H/9<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.). and Muhyi al-Din Ibn Arabi (638 A.H./1240 A.D.) had also dealt with the aspect of *Wallayah* vrs. *Nabuwwah*, whereby they implied superiority of saintship over Prophethood on some aspects.

For this act of his, Tirmidhi was exiled from his native town, Tirmidh.<sup>11</sup> Then, he backtracked and in his autobiography '*Buduww Shah*' stated that he was accused of all that had never occurred to his mind.<sup>12</sup> He further wrote that 'a Prophet first realizes saintship and then is bestowed with prophethood. Therefore all Prophets are necessarily saints.'<sup>13</sup> This proposition got general acceptability with Sufis.

Ibn al-Arabi divided Prophethood as general and special. He says, special Prophet ceased to exist after the death of Muhammad but general Prophethood has not been closed. He attempts to equate general Prophethood with saints. He considered that a saint who had esoteric knowledge '*ilm al-batin*') is conscious of that knowledge, but, the Prophet is not aware of that knowledge which he also possesses.<sup>14</sup> By this, he indirectly implied superiority of saintship.<sup>15</sup> 'Ala al-Dawlah al-Simnani (d. 717/ 1336), who is considered a balanced analytic by many, considered that a Sufi achieves 'the pearl of the

crown of the need', becomes a trustee, rightful successor of the Prophet of Islam and is capable of being called a preceptor (*Shaykh*), pole of guidance (Qutub al- Irshad) or saint (Wali). However, he holds that 'the end of the saint is the beginning of the Prophet.'

While Ibn al-Arabi compared saintship to gold and Prophethood to silver, Simnani made a cryptic note,<sup>16</sup> "For the Sufis (*ahl-i ma'ni*) silver is purer and stronger than gold; it is only for the externalists (*ahl-i zahir*) that gold is superior."

However, superiority of Prophet can be inferred from the fact that Prophet hood belonged to the days of ignorance,. As a dim light in darkness has greater value, Prophethood is superior, as it was deemed to remove the darkness or ignorance. Further it is generally agreed that sainthood is the beginning and only on its realization prophethood was bestowed. Thus, *Nabuwat* is on higher pedestral compared to *Walayah*.

The Sufis were to imbibe in themselves the prophetic qualities. Al-Hujwiri has quoted Shaikh Junaid Bughdadi having said that there are eight qualities attributed to eight different Prophets, which a Sufi should strive to have. Those are - generosity of Abraham, bliss of Ishaq, patience of Ayub, right direction of Zakaria, austerity of Yahya, woollen out-fits of Musa, the wandering of Jesus, and *faqr* of Mohammad, the last Prophet.

Religious practices adopted by Sufis can be broadly divided into

practices as prescribed in the *Shari'at* and practices not included in the *Shari'at*. To Islamic practice, the Sufi approach is that of interiorization, beginning with the broad path of the religious law (*Shari'at*), and proceeding via the path (*tariqa*) of the Sufis, to the divine reality (*haqiqa*). To put it in other words, everything has an external (*zahir*) and corresponding internal (*batin*) aspect. If the religious law and practices of Islam are taken as the external form, then Sufism is its inner meaning. The inner and outer are inseparable; one cannot approach the divine, internal reality except through the external religious structure. It follows therefore that Sufism is unthinkable without the basic Islamic religious practices such as *salat*, *safa*, *faqr*, renunciation and striving to attain higher states of spirituality.

In his account of ritual prayer (*salat*), Sarraj insists that from the beginning a Sufi must know all aspects of prayer as discussed by the religious scholars. This learning is necessary because of the paramount place of ritual prayer in Islam, and particularly because it is the locus in which the whole range of internal spiritual experience becomes available. In the performance of all Islamic religious practices, not only do the Sufis perform the literal requirements of the law, but they also fulfil it more perfectly than others. "Their custom is to hold firmly to the most comprehensive (interpretation) of religious duties, and to retain the most perfect part of the science of religious law; dependence on being excused is the way of the masses and accepting



comfort and rationalization is the condition of the weak.”

Based on ‘Islamic practices and prescriptions’ by the Prophet, Al-Hujwiri has laid down certain preliminary conditions of prayer which include purification outwardly from filth and inwardly from lust, wearing clean clothes, purity of place of worship, turning towards *Qibla* (*Ka’ba*) with divine contemplation, standing outwardly in the state of *qudrat* (power) and inwardly ‘*qurbat*’ (proximity to God), sincere intention, saying ‘*Allahu akbar*’ in awe, reciting verse of *Quran* and bowing the head with humility.<sup>17</sup>

Al-Hujwiri emphasizes the importance of *safa* (purity) in the derivation of the word Sufi; *safa* is universally praised and its opposite is *kadar* of which the Sufis have purged themselves and on that account they are called Sufis. Prophet Muhammad is supposed to have said: “The *safw* (pure part, i.e., the best part) of this world is gone and only its *kadar* (impurity) remains.” In this context, the Sufis perform an impossible task by being able to retain their *safa* (purity); and the nomenclature Sufi is a proper (*az asami-yi-alam*), in as much as the dignity of the Sufis is too great for their transactions (*muamalat*) to be hidden, so that their name should need a derivation.

Purification involves outward purification as well as inward purification. The Sufis were constantly engaged in purification in both, as ‘God loves these who often repent and those who purify themselves.’<sup>18</sup>

According to Al-Hujwiri the name has no derivations answering to

etymological requirements, because Sufism is too exalted to have any genus from which it might be derived; for the derivation of one thing from another demands homogeneity (*miyanasat*). All that exists is the opposite of purity and things are not derived from their opposites. To Sufis, the meaning of Sufism is clearer than the Sun and does not need any explanation or indication. ‘*safa*’ or purity is essential for Sufis which they persistently strive for.

For a perfect Sufi, in order to be able to conquer his own self, purity is very essential. “Verily purity is the characteristic of the veracious, if thou desirest a true Sufis, because purity (*safa*) has a root and a branch, its roots being severance of the heart from ‘others’ (*aqhyar*), and its branch that the heart should be empty of this deceitful world”. A Sufi Shaikh has said:

“Purity is not one of the qualities of Man, for Man is clay, and clay involves impurity, and Man cannot escape from impurity”.

Therefore purity bears no likeness to any acts (*af'al*), nor can the human nature be destroyed by means of effort. The quality of purity is unrelated to acts and states, and its name is unconnected with names and nicknames - purity is characteristic of the lovers (of God), who are Suns without clouds - because purity is the attribute of those who love and the lover is he that is dead (*fani*) in his own attributes and living (*baqi*) in the attributes of his Beloved.

Thus, the element of purity lends a supranormal or suprahuman

characteristic to a Sufi, which an eminent Sufi describes thus:

“The combination of the light of the Sun and Moon, when they are in conjunction, is like the purity of love and unification, when these are mingled together.”

A Sufi's mode of resignation from material temptations brings him to the mystical stages of purity (*safa*), as followed by early mystics. Purification of soul is essence of mysticism. Shaikh Junaid thus said:<sup>19</sup>

تصوف از اصطفای است هر که گزیده شد از مسیح الله او صوفی است.

“*Tasawwuf* is to be chosen for purity. Whoever is thus chosen (and made pure) from all except God is a Sufi.”

Bishr al - Hafi of early ninth century is the first Sufi who recognized the quality of purity as a condition to reach the goal of a Sufi and thus, articulated :<sup>20</sup>

صوفی آنست که دل صافی دارد با خدا.

“He is a Sufi who keeps a pure heart towards God.”

The Sufis followed general Muslim mystical attitude, besides pursuing moral and spiritual path recommended by Prophet Mohammad. They practiced spiritual exercises, renounced every thing which is not Divine and purify their soul to reach to the goal. The mystical systems of Sufis dealt with relation between soul and God, various degrees of spiritual perfection

on the Divine path, the or esoteric knowledge, the soul's effacement (*fana*) and permanency (*baqa*), the Truth (*al-Haqq*) and the perfect Man (*Insan 'ul kamil*) which they experienced in their mystical states.

The Sufis were fully convinced that God loves those who abandon every thing for the sake of their Beloved (God). Abu'd Hasan al Nuri thus says : <sup>21</sup>

تصوف دشمنی دنیا است و دوستی مولا

“Tasawwuf is hatred towards world and love for God.”

Maru'f al-Karkhi said :<sup>22</sup>

(تصوف) گرفتن حقائق و ناامید شدن از آنچه هست در دست خلايق.

“Tasawwuf is to possess realities and leave that is in the hands of man.”

A Sufi's life was distinctive life, which had to be with '*faqr*', (poverty) and other Prophetic qualities. Sufi enjoys the spiritual state of perfect renunciation, when he enters the stage of poverty (*faqr*). Shaikh Summun al-Muhibb says, “It is to not to possess any thing and nothing should possess you.”<sup>23</sup> Such a spirit of detachment from the world takes a Sufi to a stage of freedom. Abul Hassan al-Nuri further says :<sup>24</sup>

“Sufism is liberty, so that a man is freed from the bonds of desire, and generosity, and abandonment of useless trouble and munificence.”

Shaikh Sahl b. Abdullah al-Tustari observes:<sup>25</sup>

تصوف اندك خوردن است و باخدائی آرام گرفتن و از خلق گریختن.

“Tasawwuf is to eat little and to take rest with God and to be away from people.”

This complete separation from worldly things leads to the realization of spiritual state of contentment (*rida*) on his way to God.

The internal urges of a Sufi can be articulated in two ways through different “states” (*hal*, pl.*ahwal*) and “stations” *maqam*, pl.*maqamat*). The states are typically described as temporary conditions of the soul, caused by God’s spontaneous manifestations in one’s consciousness. While the states cannot be induced by human effort, the stations in contrast are described as the results of the soul striving to attain the qualities of God. In the opinion of a mystic, the state of a perfect Sufi is like the clear Sun (*arbab-i-hal*). Repentance (*tawba*), asceticism (*zuhd*), poverty (*faqr*), patience (*sabr*), trust in God (*tawakkul*) and satisfaction (*rida*) are some of the principle stations. When a person has escaped from the captivity of “stations” (*maqamat*) and gets rid of the impurity of “states” (*ahwal*) and is liberated from the abode of change and decay and becomes endowed with all praiseworthy qualities, he is disassociated from all qualities. It implies that he is not held in bondage by any praiseworthy quality of his own, nor does he regard it, nor is he made selfconceited thereby. “His state is hidden from the perception of intelligences and his time is exempt from the influx of thoughts. His presence (*huzur*)

with God has no end and his existence has no cause.” And when he arrives at this degree, he becomes annihilated (*fani*) in this world and the next, and is made divine (*rabbani*) as his humanity disappears; and gold and earth are the same to his eyes, and the ordinances which others find hard to keep, become easy for him.

In order to arrive at this degree, a Sufi performs many religious exercises and meditations - simple free prayer (*dua*), long and eloquent invocations (*daawat*) and beautiful, intimate conversations (*muajat*) and repetition of names of God (*zikr*). In addition purity (*safa*), Divine knowledge (*marifa*), revelation (*kashf*) and love of God (*ishq*) are essential characteristics, which help a Sufi to attain perfection. In fact the term Sufi itself describes a saint, who is perfect. A Sufi Shaikh has said :

“He that is purified by love is pure, and he that is absorbed in the Beloved and has abandoned all else, is a Sufi.”

The inferior aspirants (*taliban*) are called ‘*Mutasawwif*’, for *tasawwuf* belongs to the form *tafa’ul*, which implies ‘taking trouble’ (*takalluf*) and is a branch of the original root. The *Mutasawwif* seeks to reach the rank of Sufis by means of self mortification (*miyahadata*) and in his search rectifies his conduct in accordance with that of the Sufis who are dead (*fani*) to self and living (*baqi*) by the Truth, escaped from the grip of human faculties and have really attained (to God). In contrast to these two, there exists a third kind of

person the '*Mutaswif*' who makes himself like the Sufis, for the sake of wealth, power and the worldly advantages.

Apart from the above practices of Sufis which source from the *Shari'at*, certain specific practices like the *Pir-murid* relationship, *sama*, *ziyarat*, *zikr*, concept of '*wilayat*' etc. are popular among the Sufis. These practices do not derive their source from the *Shari'at*.

A Sufi in order to attain his goal, has to follow the instructions of his 'leader' who is his '*Pir*'. Thus, Baba Farid's *Pir* was Shaikh Qutub al-Din whose *Pir* was Shaikh Muin al-Din and so on. The first and foremost requirement of following a path of a Sufi is to place oneself under the guide of a 'Sufi' or 'Shaikh' or a '*Pir*'. Here he has to take a vow of complete 'obedience'. The '*Pir*' transmits spiritual power to his *murid* by the exercise of '*tawajjuh*' (concentration).

The initiated disciple '*murid*' proceeds along the various stages (*maqamat*) of the path under the mystic guidance, develops his spiritual knowledge and experiences the Truth (*al-Haqq*). The entire process of training and teaching is personal which is undisclosed. The aspirant advances on the path of pure love, experiences that God is truth and that existence completely lies in the hands of the God. He desires nothing for himself and bears no ill feeling for others. In such a stage, Rabi'a, a woman saint of second half of eighth Century said in his prayer:<sup>26</sup>

“Whatever share of this world Thou does bestow on me, bestow it on thy enemies; Whatever share of the next world Thou does give me, give it to thy friends. Thou art enough for me”.

The *sama* was another popular practice of the Sufis. *Sama*, literally means ‘hearing’ or ‘music’. Sufis organized the *sama* with a view to inducing a state of ecstasy. In India it took the form of ‘*qawwali*’ and the singers were called ‘*qawwals*’. The early mystics of Islam used to listen to formal recitation of the *Quran* which used to move their hearts and arouse their emotions. At a later stage recitations of poetry and rendering of musical compositions were also permitted on the basis of some traditions attributed to Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Shibli observed:

“*Sama* outwardly is a *fitna* (sedation), but internally it is a lesson.”

Since lawfulness of music has been the subject of long controversy, mystics’ participation in the ‘*sama*’ also became a matter of diverse opinion. The *Ulama* objected to the Sufis’ participation in the ‘*sama*’. However, for the Sufis it was not practiced for recreation but for facilitating their spiritual enrichment. The object of the *sama* was to attain ecstasy (*wajd*). Thus, Gazali says :<sup>28</sup>

“For him, whose heart is overpowered with the love of God, the *sama* is momentous (*muhiimm*), because the fire (of Love) is increased by it.”



Shaikh Zunun Misri has said :<sup>29</sup>

“*Sama* is a gift of God. Man’s heart activates on hearing this. One who listens correctly, gets the ways to God and one who hears it for ‘*nafs*’, takes the way of non-belivers”.

However, different saints practiced *sama* in different ways. Some allowed musical instruments to be played, while others did not. Shaikh Nizam al-Din, for instance did not allow the use of musical instruments in the *sama*. Some allowed *raqs* (dancing). The Sufis of *Mawlawiya silsillah* which is named after Jalal al- Din al-Rumi (d.672 A.H./1273 A.D.) were popularly known as ‘whirling *derveshes*’ because of the pattern of their dances.<sup>30</sup> Al-Hujwiri did not approve of *raqs* and so also Ibn Arabi. However Shaikh Junaid, al - Shibli, Mansur al-Hallaj etc. participated in ‘*raqs*’ in *sama*.

Gisu Daraz divides *sama* into four types from the legal point of view. *Halal* (Permitted) ones were those, whereby the thoughts of the listeners are related exclusively to Reality and Truth. When thoughts tend towards the worldly affairs, that ‘*sama*’ would be *haram* (for bidden). If those are midway between Reality and worldliness it is *makruh* (undesirable) and if those are inclined more towards Reality, then *sama* is *mubah* (allowable).<sup>31</sup> *Sama* had also been identically divided by Shaikh Nizam al - Din Auliya.<sup>32</sup>

*Zikr* is an important practice of Sufis. *Zikr*, ‘remembering’ is a special act of devotion whereby God’s name is recited again and again. It is done

while controlling the respiration. They recite words as follows:<sup>33</sup>

“*Allah* or ‘*La-ilaha - illa'llah*’ (there is no god but God )or *Allahu hadiri- Allahu Naziri - Allahu Shahidi* (God is present with, sees and witnesses-me), etc.”

Along with recital of ‘*zikh*’, he may recite some verses of *Quran*.

*Ziyarat* or visit of Shrines of Sufi saints is a common practice. The saints often visited the shrines of their *Pir*. Also, large number of visitors come for prayer and blessings. On the day of ‘*wisal*’ i.e. the day of death of a *Pir* ‘*urs*’ is celebrated. Death is considered an auspicious day when the Shaikh became one with God. *Urs Mubarak* of Muin al - Din Chishti is a very popular event when thousands of devotees throng Ajmer Sharif, where the saint’s shrine exists. *Ziyarat* is the visitation to a shrine and the shrine itself is called *mazar*. Some times the latter is called ‘*dargah*’. Other wise also everyday people from all faiths visit the *dargahs*. *Qawwali* is organized near the *dargah*. The Muslim visitors recite ‘*fateha*’ ( see Plate - IX )when they visit the shrine. Flowers are offered and ‘*agarbattis*’ are lit.

Each shrine has definite etiquettes. In the shrine of Muin al-Din Chishti, no one is allowed to sit near the *mazar*; people pray while standing nearby. In the shrine of Shaikh Qutub al-Din ( see Plate - VI ) it is obligatory to wear cap before going to the *sanctum sanctorum*. Similarly it is a popular practice to visit the *mazar* of Amir Khushrau ( See Plate - XIII )before visiting

the *mazar* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, as the former was considered very dear to the Shaikh.

Many visitors carry sweets to the *mazar* and place it on the shrine and bring it back to distribute as '*tabarruk*'. There are offerings of '*chadars*' i.e. sheet of clothes. On Thursday evening special prayers are organized, lamps are lit and placed on tombs and *qawwali* are organized. Some tie threads (*dhaga*) on the window screen of the *mazar* (see Plate - XI ) with some wishes (*mannat*).

In Sufi practices a hierarchy of saints was established. The head of *silsila* appointed *Khalifahs* to various parts or *willayats* and they in turn appointed subordinate *Khalifahs* for *qasbas* and cities. In north India, during the period of Sultanate, a hierarchy of saints came to be established.

The medieval mystics assigned importance to their personal articles and handed over to those selected to become their spiritual successor. Those include patched frock (*khirkah*), prayer carpet (*janamaz*), rosary (*tasbih*), rod (*asa*) etc. Whoever received these succeeded the '*wilayat*' as well and theoretically had the control of the territory.

*Khirka* was of four types. *Khirka-i idarat* indicates giving the *khirka* to particular disciples personally. *Kirka-i wilayat-khilafat* was one in which a Shaikh finds in a *murid* the quality and *karamat* of a *Wali* and makes him his successor and sends the *murid* to a place to look after matters (mystical)

there as his deputy. *Kirka-i tabarraka* indicates the Shaikh's entitling a disciple through some *tabarrukat* to abide by the *Shari'at* and maintain comradeship with the other Sufis. *Khirka-i salahiat* is another type of *khirka*, which is of lesser importance.

The Sufi practices were aimed partly at realization of *Haqiqa* and partly to maintain their distinct identity as per their *silsilhas* or sub-sections of the *silsilhas*. The practices that were as per the *Shari'at* could not be challenged by the *Ulama* or the Sultanate, but as far as the practices, which did not originate from the *Shari'at* were subject to occasional bone of contention between the *Ulama* and the Sufis. Sometimes, the *Ulama* took help of the Sultanate in opposing such practices of the Sufis. Though the *Ulama's* objection was based on their jealous attempt of preservice of Islamic orthodoxy, they were also protective of their position, which was undermined by the popularity and the general acceptability of the Sufis.

## NOTES

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4. Abu Nasr al-Sarraj, *Kitab al- Luma*, London, 1914 A.D., Chapter XXXVIII, pp. 73 – 74.
5. *Kashf al – Mahjub*, op. cit., pp. 97 – 98.
6. *Ibid*, p.42.
7. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*, pp. 14, 93, 253 and Amir Khwurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, Lahore, 1978., p.350.
8. Hamid Qalandar, *Khair al-Majalis*, ed. K. A. Nizami, Aligarh. 1959 A. D., pp. 134 – 5.
9. Gisu Daraz, *Maktubat*, ed. S.A. Husayn, Hyderabad, 1362 A. H.. p. 129.
10. *Ibid*, pp.124 – 5.
11. M.K. Mas'ud al – Hakim, "Tirmidh's Buduww Shah", *Islamic Studies*, Vol-3 (1965), pp. 316 – 317.
12. *Ibid*, p.317.
13. *Kashf al – Mahjub*, op. cit, p. 236.
14. Izutsu, "Comparative Study of the Philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism i Ibn 'Arabi and Loo – tzu I Chuanj – tzn", Tokyo, 1966-67: *The Ontology of Ibn Arabi*, p. 263.
15. *Ibid*, p.255.
16. Simnani, *Chihil Majlis* (Discourses), collected by Amir al- Sijistani. pp. 893 –90 a.

17. *Kashf al-Mahjub*, tr. R.A. Nicholson, 1919, p.300.
18. *Al Quran*, ii, 222, as cited in *Kashf al-Mahjub*, tr. R.A. Nicholson, p.291
19. Farid al-Din Attar, *Tazkirat al – Auliya*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, Part-I, London, 1905, p.441.
20. Ibid, p.441.
21. Ibid, p.441.
22. Ibid, p.441.
23. Ibid, Part II, pp. 85, 16, 17 and Qushayri, *Risala*, p. 148.
24. *Kashfal Mahjub*, tr. R.A. Nicholson, 1919, p.43.
25. *Tazkirat ul-Auliya*, Part I, op.cit., p.264.
26. Ibid, pp. 73.
27. Kaum Nirunan Mohaqiq, *Tarikh - e - Paedaishe Tasawwuf wa Irfan. Wa Sair – e Tahawwul wa Tatawwure – an.* p.56.
28. M. al-Ghazali, *Kimiya-e-sa'dat*, p.370.
29. Kaum Nirunan Mohaqiq, *Tarikh –e-Paedaishe Tasawwuf*, p.56
30. J.S. Tirmingham, *Sufi orders inIslam*, London, 1971, p.195.
31. M.Umar, *Halat-i Dilgudoz*, Delhi, 1326, AH. p.35.
32. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.495.
33. Bevan Jones, *The People of the Mosque*, pp.161-62.
34. *Fuwa'id al-Fu'ad*, ed. Lucknow 1302 A.H., pp.137 – 38.

## DEVELOPMENT OF SUFISM AND ITS ADVENT IN INDIA

The origin of Sufism is traced back to the practice during the time of Prophet Mohammad. However, it took a formal shape much later with the first known Sufi, Hasan of Basra. Thereafter, from time to time, new elements and modification were introduced into the teachings and practices of Sufism. Sufism went through three different stages – *Taifa* stage, *Khanqah* stage and *Tariqa* stage.<sup>1</sup> It also gave birth to fraternities in Sufi orders i.e. *silsilahs*. Though, Sufism was introduced in India immediately after its origin, it entered the country with a stronger foothold at the *khanqah* stage and after the development of Sufi *silsilahs*. The arrival of Moin al-Din Chishti just before the Sultanate period<sup>2</sup> marked the beginning of the revolutionary change in the religious ethos of the country. In the next three hundred years, during the Sultanate period, Sufism reached every nook and corner of the country and the *khanqahs* spread over nearly all political nerve centres.

The emergence of Sufism could be attributed to the disenchantment among some Muslim scholars and degeneration of the Caliphate after the death of Hazrat Ali, the fourth caliph. The period witnessed intense power struggle, bloodshed and empowerment of the ruling class. Many *Ulama* or scholars were also killed in the process. Thus, this led to aloofness from the ongoing of the time by some scholars who were inspired by the Prophet and

the early caliph. They embraced poverty and dedicated themselves in meditation to experience God. At this stage, they in their hearts were against the emergence of the Islamic state system, as it corrupted Islam substantially. However, they preferred to keep away and remain aloof.

They were different from theologians in as far as the theologians considered the *Shari'at* (Islamic laws) and the *Haqiqah* (Reality) as one and the same, while the Sufis maintained that the two are different from each other. To understand the *Shari'at* no special mental faculty is needed, but to realise the *Haqiqah* a different and dedicated procedure is required, for which the Sufis have their own way of doing. Broadly those are – ‘belief in God be complete, his relations with God be thorough, complete and were intimate without the purpose of any worldly gain, experiencing the company of God and believing that his existence is for Him alone’. This follows renunciation, giving up occupation, accepting *faqr* and continuous meditation through set procedures.

Hasan of Basara (21A.H./642A.D-110A.H./728A.D.) was the earliest known Sufi, who was gripped with the fear of God and was ever anxious not to commit any sin or mistake in his life.<sup>3</sup> he wrote a letter to the Caliph explaining him that the world is like a snake-smooth to the touch, but its venom is deadly. He also explained that wealth is an evil and poverty is the symbol of righteousness. He represented a tendency towards otherworldliness,



piety and asceticism and considered hunger and poverty as symbols of righteousness. He opined that piety is the cardinal principle of true religion, which finds reflection in truth, self-control and orientation of all action to please God. He expressed that his life in this world was like a person in a capsized boat. The fear of God and Hell made him live a life of austerity and righteousness. He is regarded as the earliest known Sufi, through whom all the Sufi *silsilahs* relate their origin. He is linked to Hazrat Imam, whom he had sympathized with during the war of succession for Caliphate. Hazrat Imam is further linked to Hazrat Ali from whom all the Sufi *silsilahs* are claimed to have originated. Hasan of Basra was regarded a Sufi because he practiced *faqr, salat, tawakkul, rida etc.*, which are considered cardinal principles of Sufism. There were others who followed suit and regarded as early Sufis. However, it was Abu Hashim Sufi of Kufah (death. 166 A.D./776 A.D.) who was considered the first one to use the nomenclature 'Sufi'. He believed that inner transformation of the heart was the essence of Sufism.

Ibrahim Adham (death. 160 A.H./777 A.D. or 783 A.D) was the king of Balkh, who gave up his throne and all worldly pleasures to become an ascetic. Abdul Wahid b. Zayd was a disciple of Hasan of Basra. Fudayl b. Iyad (death. 801 A.D.) gave up the worldly life and became a disciple of Abdul Wahid b. Zayd and later, his successor. He gave the 'rules of conduct' to his disciples.<sup>4</sup> Rabi'a al-'Adawiyyah of Basra (95 or 99 A.H./713 or 717 A.D.-

185A.H./801or 802A.D.) is considered the first woman saint and second 'Mary', who led a secluded and pious life.<sup>5</sup> She had seen a lamp while praying, which was hanging over her head without being attached to any chain, illuminating the whole house. She was very poor and working with a man, who on seeing her spiritual power set her free. She led a life totally devoted and dependent on God. Her greatest contribution was the concept of prayer as free and intimate relationship with God. Her favourite prayer was:

“Oh my God! If I worship Thee for fear of Hell, burn me in Hell and if I pray for seeking Paradise, exclude me from it; but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, then withhold not Thine Eternal Beauty”.

Hasan of Basra and his followers became Sufis out of fear of God and Hell, while Rabi'a became a Sufi due to shere love for God. They represent two different schools of thought in relation to God.

Ibrahim b. Adham , an aristocrat, renounced everything and accepted '*faqr*'. He is recognized for his teaching on austerity (*zuhd*) and trust in God (*tawakkul*) and hence Junaid calls him- 'the key of the (mystical) sciences'.<sup>6</sup> Popular Sufis during the formative period were Ma'ruf al-Karkhi (death.815/16 A.D.) and Abu Sulayman al-Darani (death. 830 A.D.) who made asceticism a form of doctrinal Sufism and preached 'self mortification' and 'aloofness' respectively. Abu Abdullah al-Antaki experienced and taught 'spiritual states in mystical path'. Bishr al Hafi<sup>7</sup> (death.841 A.D.), a bare footed Sufi and

Abu ‘ Abdallah al - Harith b. Asad al-Mushasibi (165A.H./781A.D.-243A.H./857A.D.) who analysed nafs to introduce ‘the theory of self realization’ were also popular Sufis. So far mysticism was meant for experiencing, rather than explaining.

Sufi thought and experience of mysticism was expressed publicly for the first time by Abu’l Fayd b. Ibrahim Dhu’l-Nun (180A.H./706A.D.-245A.H./859A.D.) of Egypt, considered the father of the Theosophical Mysticism.<sup>8</sup> He had divided the knowledge of God into-theological, philosophical and mystical. Sari al-Saqati (death.867A.D.) systematized different stages of mystical path. ‘Doctrinal form of Sufism’, found in developed form in the teachings of Abu Yazid Bayazid Bistami (death.260A.H./874 A.D.). He practiced and professed ‘pure love by denying one’s own self’.<sup>9</sup> Abu’l Hasan Nuri (death.907 A.D.) was popular for his ‘intuitive knowledge’ and teachings as ‘experience of Truth’ (*al - Haqq*). Uthman al-Makki (death.909 A.D.) and his teacher Abu’l Qasim b. al-Junayd (death. 298A.H./910 A.D.) were popular for their views on ‘love of God’, ‘gnosis’, ‘self unification’ and ‘soul’s unification with God’. He emerged as a model Sufi whom both Sufis and *Ulama* held in high esteem and quoted from him. Al-Hallaj (244A.H./857A.D.-309A.H./922A.D.) was a great Sufi saint, who pronounced ‘Ana’l Hqq (I am the creative Truth ‘God’), which created an unprecedented controversy. Possibly, he uttered such words when

he experienced self-annihilation and oneness with God.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, for his revolutionary thought he was executed on 26 th March 922 A.D.

Abu Bakr-al Shibli (death. 945 A.D.), a disciple of Junayd said:

“The state of gnosis is like the mode of spring. Thunder roars and cloud pours rain, lightening flashes and wind blows, bud opens and the bird sings. Similar is the condition of knower of God - he weeps through his eyes, smiles through his lips, burns his heart, gives away his head, recollects the name of the Beloved and moves around his door”.<sup>11</sup>

Shaykh Abu Bakr Kalabadhi ( death.378A.H./988 or 995A.D.) became well known for his ‘*Kitab -al-tarrafi li - Madhhab ahl al-Tasawwuf*’ (Book of Inquiry into the Tenets of the Sufis). He says in his doctrine of *Tawhid*, “God is one, Alone, Single, Eternal, Ever - Lasting, Knowing, Powerful, Living, Seeing, Hearing, Strong, Mighty, Majestic, Great, Generous . . . . He is neither body, nor form, nor person, nor element, nor accident; . . . . He has neither parts nor particles nor members nor limbs nor aspects nor places”.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly Abe Tasib al - Makki (death. 996 A.D.) wrote *Qut al-Qutub*, (The Food of Hearts) and gave important doctrines of ‘*sabr*’ (patience), love and ‘*Ma’rifa*’. Shaikh Abu Sa’id (death.1048 A.D.) revolutionised Sufi philosophy and gave a different meaning to it by saying that a friend of God should seek Him in the hearts of men and be in the midst of men; eat, sleep, buy, sell, marry, socialise and yet never for a moment forget God.<sup>13</sup>

A new era in Sufi thought started, when Abu Hamid al-Ghazali defended orthodoxy in Islam and reconciled this with mysticism, in his famous *Ihya' ulum al-din* (The revival of Religious sciences).<sup>14</sup> 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani (470A.H./1077A.D.-561A.H./1166A.D.), the founder of Qadiriya order attempted to develop Quranic mysticism and emphasised on control of '*nafs*' as essential criteria in Sufism. Sufi thought took a new turn with Muhyiuddin Ibn al-Arabi's (560A.H./1165A.D.- 638A.H./1240A.D.) concept of '*Wahdatu'l Wajud*' (Unity of Being) in his work *Al-Futuh al-Makkiyya*, which was considered the opposite of the theory of '*tawhid*' (unity of God).<sup>15</sup>

He said, " In His state of unity, God exists in himself and in his state of multiplicity he exists through Himself".

In twelfth and thirteenth centuries some Sufi poets and writers were also flourished. Farid al - Din Attar (1119 A.D.–1229 or 1230 A.D.) who wrote *Tadhkiratul Auliya*, the Memoirs of the Saints and *Pandnama*, *Mantiqu'l-Tayr* etc. Jalal al- Din Rumi (birth. 1205 A.D.), an eminent Sufi poet wrote '*Mathnawi-i Ma' nawi*, *Diwan* etc., which became very popular in Asia. Shaikh Sa'di of Shiraz (1184A.D.-1291A.D.) who is supposed to have visited Punjab had written *Gulistan* (Rose Garden) and *Bustan* (Orchard). During this the famous *Awairifu'l Ma'arif* was written by Shaikh Shihab al - Din Suhrawardi.

As far as the history of Sufism as an organized philosophical and social movement is concerned, it may be roughly divided into three distinct stages. J.S. Trimingham, in his study, '*The Sufi Orders in Islam*', describes the stages through which Sufism in its organisational aspect has passed. The three stages, *Taifa* stage, *Khanqah* stage and *Tariqa* stage, should not however, be perceived as rigid and exclusive units.

Early Sufism was based on Quranic verses and the practices of the Prophet (*sunna*). Fear of God was the dominant feature, though elements of love were not totally absent. During the later part of this phase, the emphasis shifted to the love of God rather than fear. At this time, there was an emphasis on experiencing rather than spreading to the masses. In lower Iraq and Khorasan, Sufis like Hasan al-Basria, Ibrahim b. Adham, Shaiq al-Balkh and Abd-Allah b. al-Mubarak led quietist and highly ascetic lives of withdrawal from the mundane society of the Abbasid Caliphate. Since the attainment of such affinity involved a discipline or method to be learned and followed, a tradition of the master and his circle of pupils soon characterized this phase. However, the master did not act as an intermediary between the pupils and God. In fact, the early Sufi groups were loose and mobile associations and there was no formal ritualistic bond between the teacher and the pupils.

*Khanqah* stage lasted from around 10th century A.D. till the 12th

century A.D. This stage of Sufism was the true golden age of Islamic mysticism in terms of creativity of thought, the quantity of original literature produced and the simplicity of the Sufis' social organization.<sup>16</sup> During the later part of the *khanqah* stage, Sufism gradually began to acquire the form of an organized movement, with the establishment of Turkish rule under the Ghaznavis and Seljuqs in various parts of central Asia and Iran.

The next stage in the development of Sufism - the *tariqa* stage lasted from about 12th century till the 13th century A.D.<sup>17</sup> This phase saw the formation of mystical schools or orders (*silsilahs*) that had begun to centre around a particular Sufi master. As these Sufi orders began to crystalise, each one of them began to perpetuate the name of one particular Sufi master and his spiritual ancestry. This phase was characterized by the gradual systematization of mystical techniques and exercises – *tariqa* i.e. spiritual practices and rituals, which were peculiar to a particular *silsilah* and designed to bring the Sufi into direct communion with God. As such, the Sufis concentrated on the method of learning and mastering a structured set of spiritual exercises. Also, the principle of transmission of the method from one Sufi to another became explicit, resulting in the formation of spiritual lineage of *silsilahs*. The formation of orders introduced the phenomenon of initiation.

In contrast to the *khanqah* stage where both the teacher and the pupil

were essentially equal in their capacities to attain their spiritual goal, in this phase of institutional evolution, a distinction became discernible between the *pir* (*murshid*) and disciple (*murid*).<sup>18</sup> Although, a *murid* might eventually attain the spiritual heights of his *pir*, he was in the first instance, obliged to surrender himself completely to the *pir* and to the whole complex of exercises, terminology and disciplines that his *pir* taught. In this phase, there emerged another category of disciples besides the *murid*-the *Khalifa*,<sup>19</sup> literally “successor” who was closer to the *pir* than other *murids* and unlike the latter, he was deputised to initiate *murids* into the order of the *pir*.

Sufism entered its final stage - *taifa* (literally “cult association”) around 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>20</sup>, the exact timing of the transition varying widely from order to order, and from place to place. The mystical element of Sufism, which was in unrestrained abundance in the *khanqah* stage and which in *tariqa* phase, was subjected to a good deal of systematisation, now began to play a minor role in the movement. The Sufis’ direct communion with God was replaced by veneration, and even worship of a *pir*, who now occupied the position of spiritual intermediary between the disciple and God. *Pirs*, thus became saints-*wali* (literally “friend of God”). The emphasis shifted from spiritual discipline and Sufi training to Sufi saint cults centered on their spiritual power or *baraka*.

In the Indian context, the *taifa* phase began around the 14th century,



when the *dargah* began to replace the *khanqah* as the physical embodiment of the Sufis. However, there were still *murshids* imparting training to the *murids* and the second phase of the development of Sufism did not come to an abrupt end. Whereas in the earlier two phases, Sufism was confined to a small spiritual elite, aiming to establish communion with god, it now developed into a popular movement in which the masses could freely participate. Veneration of Sufi saints and pilgrimage to their *dargahs* was more popular in India than in Islamic countries, perhaps because of the influence of the typical socio-religious milieu in India, during the period. For, in the belief system of plurality of God hood, it got a fertile ground to flourish.

The numerous mystic schools, *silsilahs*, which came up around the 10th century, were finally consolidated into two opposed systems during the first quarter of the 13th century and both systems found their expression in assical text books - *Fusus al - Hikam* of Ibn al-Arabi and *Awarif al - Ma'arif* of Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi. For the Sultanate period in India, the philosophy of Ibn al-Arabi does not appear so important. India was exclusively in the sphere of the *Awarif*.

It also becomes important to throw light on the emergence of various Sufi orders or Sufi *silsilahs*, to have better comprehension of the history of Sufism. In 12<sup>th</sup> century, many Sufi *silsilahs* took birth and got organized. All the orders trace their chains of succession back to Prophet Mohammad. Next

to the Prophet, in most cases, was Ali and in a few cases Abu - Bakr stood second. Importance of Ali in Sufism is very great, as the Prophet had once said, "I am the house of knowledge and Ali is its gate."

Hasan of Basra's name figures next in the chain of succession. Khwaja Abdu'l Wahid b. Zayd and Habibu'l - 'Ajami – the two disciples of Hasan stood at the two main lines of Sufi orders. From them sprang *Chawda Khanwade* or fourteen families or orders of Sufis. Most of the remaining orders are also from these fourteen orders. Incidentally, Abul Fazl in *Ain-i Akhbari* refers to fourteen orders of Sufis found in India. They are as follows <sup>21</sup>:

1. *Habiba*, founded by Shaikh Habib 'Ajami.
2. *Taifuria*, founded by Shaikh Bayazid Taifur Bistami.
3. *Karkhia*, founded by Khwaja Ma'ruf Karkhi.
4. *Saqatia*, founded by Shaikh Abul Hassan Sari Saqati.
5. *Junaidia*, founded by Shaikh Junaid Baghadai.
6. *Gazrunia*, founded by Shaikh Abu Ishaq b. Shahryar.
7. *Tusia*, founded by Shaikh 'Ala al - Din Tusi.
8. *Firdausia*, founded by Shaikh Najm al - Din Kupbra.
9. *Suhrawardia*, founded by Shaikh najib al - Din 'Abdul Qahir Suhrawardi.
10. *Zaidia*, founded by Shaikh 'Abdul Wahid b. Zaid.
11. *Iyazia*, founded by Shaikh Fuzail b. Ayas.

12. *Adhamia*, founded by Shaikh Ibrahim Adham.
13. *Hubiria*, founded by Khwaja Hubairat al - Basri, and
14. *Chishtia*, founded by Khwaja Abu Ishaq.

*Zaidia silsilah*, which is mentioned above, was founded by Abdul Wahid b. Zaid and it had four sub-orders namely *Iyadiya*, *Adhamiya*, *Hubayriya* and *Chishtiya*. Rest of the orders except *Saqataia* order sprang from *Habibiyya* order founded by Habibul-Ajami, another disciple Hasan of Basra. *Habibiyya* order also has one more sub division, *Tartawsiya* order, founded by Abu'l Farah Tartawsi, from which further *Qadiriya* order emerged at the hands of Abdu'l Qadir Jilani, the fourth spiritual successor of Abu'l Farah Tartawsi.

Of all the above orders, only *Chishtiya*, *Suhrawardia* and *Qadiriya* orders made inroads in India during the Sultanate period ( see Plate - II for *shijra* of important orders). *Firdawshia* sect, which is another sub order, also made some impact during the period, especially at Patna in Bihar.<sup>22</sup> The above orders were far from orthodoxy of Islam and adapted to the social milieu of the Indian subcontinent.

Within the context of Islam, however, Sufism constructs a dichotomy - one between the head and the heart, between cold formalism and the warmth of personal experience. It also implicates a hegemonic versus a universalist dichotomy, in which the head stands for conquest and subordination and the heart for universal love and compassion. In that sense, there is an element in

Sufism, which brings it to cross the Islamic boundaries, for its emphasis on universal love has clear popular cultural underpinnings. The Chishti *silsilah* was the forerunner in this regard and this was perhaps the reason for its immense popularity and success in the Indian milieu. Perhaps, as an attempt to overcome any assumed dichotomy between Sufism and Islam, some of the earliest treatises concerning Sufism were apologetic works, designed to show that Sufism was not in conflict with the Islamic religious sciences, but complemented and perfected them. The genuineness of Islamic mysticism was demonstrated in the wake of the highly politicised persecutioin of certain Sufis, particularly, Hussain ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (244A.H./857A.D.-309A.H./992 A.D.). The works of Sarraj, Abu Bakr Kalabadhi (death.378A.H./990 AD.) and Abu al-Qasim al - Qushayri (death.1074 AD) belong to this category. These scholars related Sufism to *Hanafi* jurisprudence and *Ashari* theology.

Even as Sufis often cross the boundaries set by Islam, their aim is not to conquer realms other than that of Islam and things worldly (*Jihad-i Akbar*); in fact, they are constantly engaged in *Jihad-i Asghar*, in an attempt to conquer their own self. Thus, quite early in its history, Sufism acknowledged the existence of space within its own frame, which could be turned to the construction of posser and worldly advantage, though it tried to dismiss this space as a simulated than an authentic Sufi phenomenon. But, surely, if mere simulation of a phenomenon could yield power, the genuine thing had the

capacity for more, even if its wielders in their own consciousness disowned all claims to it.

Ever since the days of Muslim conquest India has been a land of Sufis. Historians tell us that Islam came to India through the sea, through Persia into Sind and through Khyber Pass. Some Sufis might have also come to India following the steps of peaceful Arab traders. Islam first appears to have come to India in the South, as can be learned from the Muslim historians and Arab travellers, possibly through Malabar Coast. Tradition points out that tomb of Tamim Ansari, possibly a companion of the Prophet exists at Mylapur, twelve miles south of Chennai.<sup>23</sup>

When Islam reached Malabar, it simultaneously reached the coasts of Ceylon, Laccadive and Maldives also. Ibn Batuta reports that during his visit to Ceylon, he found tombs of several saints and preachers such as that of Baba Tahir, Shaikh Abdudllah Hanif and Shaikh ‘Uth man’.

Thirty years after the death of the Prophet, Mu’a wiya stationed a very large army at the frontier town of Kankan bringing Islam to the gateway of India. However, it is Mohammad bin Qasim who invaded Sindh in 712 A.D. and opened the first important contact through land route. Later, Turk, Mongol and Afghan forces came to India through Khyber Pass, which became the main route for Muslim ascetic and *derveshes* to India. Thus, before Muslim occupation of any Indian land, Islam and Islamic mystics had already come

to India. Muslim conquests of northern India however helped their consolidation and expansion.

Ibn Khaldun, an Arabic Historian, contends that Sufism emerged in 2<sup>nd</sup> century Hijra<sup>24</sup>. The first person having used the nomenclature was Abu Hashim Sufi. The first among the Sufis having come to India appears to be Abu Hifs Rabi bin Sahib al-Asadi al-Basari, a traditionalist and ascetic, who came to Sind, where he died in 776-77 A.D. Among the Sufis of the earliest times who visited India, tradition mentions the name of Mansur al-Hallaj, who made a voyage to India by sea in the 10<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>26</sup> The first Sufi to visit Lahore that history mentions was Ismail Lahori (1005 A.D.-1054 A.D.). Bathad Vali who was born of a princely family in Turkey, but later became a saint and devoted his life towards the spreading of Islam, came to Madurai and Trichinapalli in 1039 A.D. His tomb stands in Trichinapalli.<sup>27</sup> His disciples, Sayyid Ibrahim Shaheed and Baba Fakhr al-Din also preached in India.

Among the earliest Sufis of India, Baba Ratan's name is prominent who is said to have visited Mecca twice and finds mention in *'Asaba fi' Ma'rifatis-Sahaba'* of Ibn Hajar Asqalani and *Tajrid* of Ad-Dhahabi. In the former, he is ranked as a companion of the Prophet whom he had met and accepted Islam. He is said to have lived for seven hundred years and is buried in 'Tabar Hind'<sup>28</sup>, i.e. modern Bhatinda.

The legend of '*Bibi Pakdaman*' reveals that in the seventh century, seven ladies from Hazrat Ali's household fled to Lahore due to the defeat of Hussain's army by Yazid at Karbala. They are said to be Ruqiya, known as Bibi Haj, Bibi Hur, Bibi Nur, Bibi Gawhar, Bibi Taj and Bibi Shahbaz. The first one being daughter of Hazrat Ali, the fourth '*Khalifa*' and son-in-law of Prophet Mohammad, and others, daughters of Aqil, brother of Hazrat Ali. There was another lady accompanying them, Bibi Tannur (*tandur*), the lady of furnace, who was their kitchen maid. Their tombs, seven in total, are popularly known as *Bibi Pakdaman*, highly respected shrines at Lahore. When the nonbelievers harassed them beyond endurance, they prayed that the earth might shield them from their sight; the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them. The Prince of Lahore, witnessing this miraculous deliverance, turned a hermit, built seven tombs over the spot and he became its *mujawir* (guardian). The Prince was called Baba Kaki, who died in 719-20 A.D. and was buried in the vicinity. Indian bakers in Lahore today also regard the kitchen maid Bibi Tannur, as their patron saint (*Nanbai*). Mahmud Gaznawi built an enclosure around the tombs and much later Akbar also made some structures.

Sayyid Salar Mas'ud Ghazi Minyan or Bale Mian, reference to whom is found in *Mirat-i Mas'udi* and Elliot's '*History of India*' in his work '*Historical Romance*'<sup>29</sup> was another martyr Sufi. It is said that his mother Sitr-i-Mu'alla was a sister of Mahmud Ghaznavi. He was a Sufi warrior and

fought many wars and died at Baharaich on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1033 AD, at the age of nineteen. His tomb is the scene of great annual fair i.e. *Urs*. The main feature of this *Urs* is his marriage with Zuhra Bibi, a resident of Barabanki and a blind girl who had her eyesight restored, when she visited the tomb. She had erected a shrine on the tomb and was buried there itself, when she died unmarried at the age of 18. A custom developed, as her parents and relatives visited the tombs of both to celebrate their marriage. The celebration is accompanied by a procession, music, dance and the mythical marriage. In other parts of the country also the *Urs* of Ghazi Mian is celebrated.

About this time arose another great Sufi saint, who left deep imprint on the Sufi history of the subcontinent. He was Ali'u'l-Hujwiri (death. 1071 A.D.), popularly known as Data Ganj Baksh, a native of Ghazana in Afghanistan and a disciple of Muhammad b al- Hasan al-Khuttali, spiritually connected to Shaikh Junayd Baghdadi. He was a great advocate of celibacy and a wanderer, who finally settled at Lahore and is buried there. He is believed to be holding the supreme authority over the Sufis of India. Those Sufis who subsequently came to India could not enter the country without first obtaining his permission at his shrine ( see Plate - IV ). He wrote *Kashf al-Mahjoob*, which is considered a pioneer work on Sufism.

Muin al-Din Chishti Sanjari, who came to India after obtaining permission from Shaikh al-Hujwiri's spirit at his shrine at Lahore, settled in



India. He was the founder of Chishti *silsilah* in India and eighth in the line of succession from its founder by Khwaja Abu Shani Chishti ( see Plate III ). He was the *murid* of Shaikh Usman Harooni, whom he served for twenty years continuously without a break for an hour. Amir Khwurd writes about him in the following words:<sup>30</sup>

این بادشاه اهل اسلام خلیفهٔ خواجه عثمان هارونی بود۔

“The king of spiritual people in Islam (Shaikh Muin al-Din) was the *khalifa* of Khwaja Usman Harooni”.

While taking permission from Ali’u’l-Hujwiri after deep meditation at his shrine, he uttered the following words:

“Thou art the Ganj Baksh (the munificent one) of both the worlds;  
Thou art the perfect pir for perfect saints;  
And the guide for those yet imperfect.”

From this time onwards Ali’u’l-Huwiri is known as Data Ganj Baksh. Shaikh Muin al-Din visited Delhi and then finally settled at Ajmer in 1165-66 A.D. Mir Kwurd has reported that When Muin al-Din came to Ajmer, Pithaura Rai was the King of Hindustan. He died in 1236 A.D. and was buried in Ajmer. His shrine is the most celebrated of shrines in India, visited by devotees from world over ( see Plate - V ).

There were three important *Khalifas* of the Shaikh- Shaikh Abdu’llah Karmani of Bengal, who founded Karmani order, Shaikh Pir Karim of Ceylon,

who founded Karimi order and Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, who settled in Delhi and is considered the real spiritual successor of the Shaikh. Shaikh Qutub al-Din showed extraordinary signs of divinity from his childhood. He had the benefit of spiritualism of Shaikh Muin al-Din Chishti and Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria – both from Chishti and Suhrawardi orders, respectively. Following the footsteps of Shaikh Muin al-Din, he came to Delhi where he was treated with due respect by Sultan Iltutmish, who considered him his spiritual leader. Thus, with royal patronage, Shaikh Qutub al-Din established himself as the unquestionable spiritual leader. Shaikh Jalal al-Din of Suhrawardi order and a disciple of Shaikh Baha al-Din had come to Delhi on request from the Sultanate, but the people of Delhi and the Sultan himself pledged their allegiance to Shaikh Qutub al-Din, which marked the beginning of establishment of spiritual domination of Chishti *silsilah* in Delhi. It was through him, ‘*sama*’ became popular in Delhi, though it became a subject of fierce controversy as orthodox religious leaders resented it. Mir Khwurd reports about him in following words:<sup>31</sup>

شيخ الاسلام نامدار قطب الحق والدين بختيار اوشى قدس الله  
سره العزيز خليفه شيخ الاسلام معين الدين حسن سنجرى بود.

“Shaikh al-Islam Qutub al haq-wa-din, bright star of truth and religion  
was the disciple of Shaikh Muin al-Din Hasan Sanjari.”

After Shaikh Qutub al-Din, his successor Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shagr, popularly known as Baba Farid, became the head of Chishti *silsilah*.

His father was a *Qazi* of Kathwal in Multan who had fled from Kabul during the invasion of Chingiz Khan. He was educated in the *khanqah* of Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria, but became the disciple of Shaikh Qutub al-Din during his brief stay in Multan.

Mir Khwurd reports:<sup>33</sup>

فريدالحق والدين قدس الله سره العزيز بخدمت  
شيخ الاسلام قطب الدين بختيار بيعت کرده است.

“Shaikh Farid al-Din became the disciple of Shaikh Qutub al-Din

Bakhtiyar Kaki.”

He after his education followed his master and came to Delhi, where he became immensely popular. As he resented popularity, he left Delhi and settled at Ajodhan. He practiced *yoga* regularly and was known as a wandering *dervesh*. He lived a life of piety and austerity and made his *khanqah* an institution of religions teachings. His tittle Shagr Ganj or Ganj-i Shagr is said to have come from his mother's inducement for prayer, by placing some sweets under his prayer carpet. He died in 1265 A.D. at the age of 93. His shrine ( see Plate - VII ) is at Ajodhan which contains a door of paradise i.e. *Bihishti Darwaza*, through which the devotees make a point to pass through. Another disciple of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki was Qazi Hamid al-Din Nagouri, who settled in Rajasthan and propagated Islam there. But he died in Delhi and wished to be buried at the feet of his *pir*. His sons buried him as per his wish, but only after making a *chabutra* (platform), projecting

position for him.<sup>34</sup>

*Faridi* section of Chishti order gave rise to two streams of mystical teachings – one led by Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya and the other one by Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali Ahmad Sabir of Piran Kaliar, respectively known as *Nizami* section and *Sabiria* section of Chishti order.

Makhdum Ala al-Din Sabir of Piran Kaliar<sup>35</sup> was born in Herat in 1197-8 A.D. and was left with Baba Farid, his uncle, by his mother, as his father had already died. He was appointed to supervise the *langar khana* in the *khanqah* of Baba Farid. He had become weak and when Baba Farid inquired the cause of his weakness, he said that he was there to supervise the kitchen, but had not been asked to eat from it. Baba Farid was overjoyed with his patience i.e. *sabr* and titled him as Sabir. Later, he appointed him as his successor and sent him to Piran Kaliar.

At Piran Kaliar, he was ill-treated by the people and driven out of the mosque, when he went for Friday prayer. As a consequence of this, the entire mosque suddenly collapsed, crushing hundreds of people praying there. This was followed by plague and the people fled from Kaliar. The place became a forest from a habitated town and in this isolated place he spent his days. He had only one disciple in his company- Shams al-Din Turk. He was fond of *sama*, but the singers sat at a considerable distance, due to *jalal* (terror) of the Shaikh. He died in 1291AD on 13<sup>th</sup> *Rabi ul Awwal* and on this date his

*Urs* is celebrated ( see Plate - XII ).

Shaikh Ala al-Din's gloomy disposition and irascible temperament was in contrast to Shaikh Nizam al-Din's amiable nature and wide popularity. While, Shaikh Ala al-Din gave expression to *jalali* or the terrible attributes, Shaikh Nizam al-Din gave expression to *jamali* or glorious attribute of the Almighty. They represented *Ahl-i khilawat* i.e. recluses and *Ahl-i suhbat* i.e. associate characteristics respectively.

Shaikh Nizam al-Din was born in Badayun. His grand parents had come from Bukhara. His father died when he was 5 years old and his mother Zulaikha, much venerated as a saint brought him up. Her shrine is at Udhchini, which is visited by many, especially women devotees. At the age of 20, he became a disciple of Baba Farid and at 23 he was appointed as *Khalifa* and was asked to settle in Delhi<sup>36</sup>. He expanded the *silsilah* in an unprecedented way and was considered the spiritual leader of the world of his time. He saw many ups and downs in Delhi, dealing with thirteen Sultans, some of them very hostile towards him, as he neither visited the court, nor allowed the courtiers to visit him. In subsequent chapter we will be discussing about this through anecdotes. He died in 724 A.H./1324 A.D. at the age of 91 and was buried in Ghiyaspur in Delhi, now known by his name - Nizamuddin. His shrine ( see Plate - IX, X and XI ) is a place of pilgrimage for many devotees. He had seven hundred *Khalifas* spread over the country<sup>37</sup> and a few other

countries. He was popularly known a *Mahboobh-i Ilahi*.<sup>38</sup>

His successor was Shaikh Nasir to al-Din Chiragh Delhi<sup>39</sup> (see Plate - XIV ) who carried the traditions, devotions and procedures of Shaikh Nizam al-Din. However, he faced humiliation and torture at the hands of then Sultan, with extreme patience or *sabr*. Manlana Burhan al-Din Gharib<sup>40</sup> was another *Khalifa* who migrated to Diogir and popularized Chishti mystical practices in the Deccan. He lies buried at Daulatabad. Manlana Shams al-Din Yahya<sup>41</sup>, Shaikh Fakhr al-Din Zarradi<sup>42</sup>, Maulana Ala al-Din Nili were other *Khalifas* settled at Delhi. Shaikh Yusuf Chanderi<sup>43</sup> another *Khalifa* settled at Chanderi in Madhya Pradesh, Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munuwar at Hansi<sup>45</sup> and Shaikh Akhi Siraj<sup>46</sup> in Bengal, lying buried in Pandua, Maulana Shaihab al-Din<sup>47</sup> at Daulatabad and Maulana Husan al-Din Multani<sup>48</sup> at Pattan in Gujarat.

Sayyid Gesu Daraz succeeded Shaikh Nasir al-Din and was a longhaired saint who settled in Gulbarga, on request from the Sultan there. He died in 1422 AD and was succeeded by his son, Sayyid Akbar Husaini. In Bengal, the pioneer of Chishti order was Siraj al-Din, a *Khalifant* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din. His successor was Shaikh Ala al-Din who was succeeded by Nur al-Din, known as Qutub-i-Alam of his time.

Suhrawardi order founded by Diya al-Din Najib Suhrawardi (death. 1167 AD), the author of *Abau'l Muridin* and made some inroads in India.

His nephew, Shihab al-Din (639A.H./1144A.D.- 632A.H./1234A.D.) of Baghdad was a great exponent of Suhrawardi mysticism and wrote *Awarifu'l Ma'arif*. Shaikh Sa'di mentions him in '*Bustan*'. His vice-gerent, Sayyid Nur al-Din Mubarak came to Delhi and was appointed as *Shaikh -ul-Islam* by Sultan Iltutmish. Another disciple, Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria<sup>49</sup> (death. 1267 AD), settled in Multan and is considered the pioneer saint of the order in India. Qazi Hamid al-Din Nagouri (death. 1279 AD.) was considered his *Khalifa* who came to Delhi but became a disciple of Shaikh Qutub al-Din. Shaikh Jalal al-Din Tabrezi<sup>50</sup> (death. 1225 AD.), who was also a vice gerent of the Shaikh, became a disciple of Shaikh Qutub al-Din and was sent to Bengal. Sayyid Nur al-Din and Shah Turkoman, the pioneers of Suhrawardi order in Delhi were friends of Shaikh Qutub al-Din. Shaikh Sadr al-Din (d. 1285 AD), son of Shaikh Baha al-Din was another important saint in Multan, who had given up ancestral wealth<sup>51</sup> and had married the divorced grand daughter of Iltutmish.

The Suhrawardi order was later divided into *be-shara* and *ba shara* sections. *Be-shara* means without the laws, depicting those Sufis who did not adhere to laws of Islam and some of them took to worshipping saints, resorting to hypnosis and using istoxicants. They are also known as *malamatis* i.e. lit. blame worthy. On the other hand, those who observe and confirm to Islamic laws are called *ba shara*. However, it is difficult to make a clean

distinction, as some of the *jalali* sections of *ba shara* Sufis had degenerated later and became *be shara*.

Sayyid Jala al-Din (d.1192 AD), *Khalifat* of Shaikh Baha al-Din, founded the *jalali* sub section, which was a part of the *ba shara* section of the order and settled at Uchh. His followers were known as *jalali fakirs*, who wore black threads round their head, an amulet (*tawiz*) round their arm and used to blow a horn in ecstasy. Other sub sections like *Miran Shahi*, *Ismail Shahi* etc. of *ba shara* section came after the Sultante period and are not within the preview of our study.

As regards *be-sahra* section, *Lal Shahbaziyya* and *Suhagiyya* sub sections were prominent. Sayyid Lal Shahbaz, who did not say obligatory prayers, wore red garments, and used wine and other intoxicants, founded the former section. This is attributed as means to conceal his spiritual dignity. It is proclaimed that with his holy touch wine used to become water and hence intoxicant or wine had no effect on him. He lies buried in Sindli. Musa Shahi Suhagan, who used to live with eunuchs to hide his spiritual attainment and to dress up like a suhagan, founded the latter. He neither said his regular prayers, nor fasted. He had caused rainfall instantly during a drought. He lived in Ahmedabad. *Rasul Shahi* sub-section emerged during the Mughal period.

Qadiri order was established in India by Sayyid Mohammad Ghowth



(death.1517 AD).He had settled in 'Uchh'and was known as *Pir-i Piran*, the saint of the saints. Sultan Sikandar Lodi was his disciple and had given his daughter to him in marriage. His son, who earlier led a luxurious life, returned all favours of government and led a life of austerity. His brother held a high office in the government. He refused to meet the Princes, on being specifically invited. He died in 1533-34 AD and lies buried in 'Uchh'.

During the Sultanate period, Madari and Shattari orders also came to India. Badi al-Din Madari was the founder of Madari order, who was settled in Makanpur, near Kanpur, where he died in 1485 AD. During his *Urs*, *Madari faquirs* walk on fire saying. '*Dam Madari*'. His shrine is prohibited for women.

Shaikh Abdullah Shattar, the founder of Shattari (speed) order, which is supposed to be the shortest way of '*fana*' and '*baqa*', settled at Mandu, the capital of Malwa and died in 1428-29 AD. Shah Muhammad Gawth was a famous saint of this order, who lived through the Sultanate and the Mughal periods and was highly revered by Humayun. His book *Miraj* (ascension), had later become a subject of controversy. Other works of his were *Jawahir-i Khamisa* and *Awrad-i Gawthiyya*. He died in 1562-63 AD and his tomb is at Gwalior.

Qalandari order was introduced in India by Sayyid Nazm al-Din, a disciple of Sayyid Khidr Rumi Qalandar, who lived for two hundred years

and died in 1432 AD, at Mandu, where his shrine is much renerated. He was succeeded by Qalandar Sarandaz-i-Gawthi, who died in 1518 AD, at the age of 145. His title Sarandaz, indicated severance of his head, while performing ‘*dhikr*’. Sharf al-Din Bin Ali Qalandar of Panipat, initially a *mufti* in Delhi, was also a famous Qalandar, he is the only saint in Islam, whose shrines exist at two places- Panipat as well as Karnal, who was first buried in Karnal when he died in 1329 AD, but later, people from Panipat, reburied him in Panipat. His Shrines exist at both places and his *Urs* is celebrated in the holy month of Ramzan. He, once addressed Sultan Ala al-Din as ‘Chief policeman of Delhi, which the Sultan acknowledged happily.

The process of development of Sufism, since its inception, took about three centuries before it became an organized movement. No sooner it became an organized movement, it entered the Indian sub-continent with a strong foothold to take another three centuries to spread over the length and the breadth of the sub-continent. During the Sultanate period, though, various *silsilahs* came to India, it is only Chishti and Suhrawardi *silsilahs*, which attained significant positions during the period and left deep inprint in the socio-religious ethos of the land.

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## STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SUFI KHANQAH: A POWER CENTRE WITH MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ROLE

During the medieval period, the *khanqah* played an important and multidimensional role. There was an intricate relationship between the *khanqah* formation, urban expansion and power mechanism, especially during the Sultanate period. As a complex social and administrative network existed within the *khanqah* and between the *khanqah* and the Sultanate, the *khanqah* played an inevitable role in the continuous discourse of power. It ran parallel to the institution of the Sultanate and became a subject of concern for many Sultans during the period.

The term *khanqah* meaning 'Sufi convent' assumes important overtones in more contexts than one. The *khanqah* or *jama'at khana* was a special building to meet the requirements of the Sufis, their followers and visitors, which provided accommodation for each visitor and inmate. At that time, *khanqahs* were made for feeding the poor and the *durveshes*.<sup>1</sup> The Chishti saints built *jama'at khana*s, while the Suhrawardi saints constructed *khanqahs*. Popularly, both the terms were used as synonyms. In contrast to these, the *zawiyahs* were smaller places, where mystics lived and prayed, but unlike the inmates of the *khanqahs* and the *jama'at khana*s, they did not aim at establishing any vital contact with the world outside.

The *jama'at khana* usually consisted of a big hall. All the inmates

lived a community life. The roof of this *jama'at khana* was supported by a number of pillars and at the foot of each of these pillars a mystic could be seen with all his belongings - bedding, books and rosary. They all slept., prayed and studied on the ground and no discrimination, not even on the basis of seniority or piety, was permitted to prevail in the *jama'at khana*. If food was available, all would partake of it; if not, all would suffer jointly the pangs of hunger. Often there was non-availability of food in the khanqahs of Shaikh Qutub al - Din and Baba Farid. In the *jama'at khanah* of Shaikh Farid, the inmates had to pluck pelu and delah<sup>2</sup> from the kareel trees, fetch water, collect wood from the jungle, and then a saltless dish could be prepared for them.<sup>3</sup> The quality of food depended on the *futuh* received. Shaikh Nizam al-Din's khanqah had comparatively better provisions, as there are evidences of serving of meat, tahiri, sambosas etc. from time to time.<sup>4</sup>

The Subrawardi *khanqahs* in contrast to Chishti ones received enormous *futuh* and often had a *khazana* where the *futuh* could be stored.<sup>5</sup> Even the local administration looked for help<sup>6</sup> from them in case of dire circumstances like drought etc. There is reference in the *Siyar al-Arifin* of abundance of wealth in Suhrawardi *khanqahs*.<sup>7</sup> Jamali has reported :<sup>8</sup>

"The Shaikhs kept and spent the wealth carefully."

They received enormous *futuh*. For instance Shaikh Rukn al-Din received a hundred villages from Sultan Mohammad bin Tughlaq.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the

Suhrawardi *khanqahs* were better furnished and better organised. They had an aristocratic character laced with deep religious fervour. This is similar to the present day *haram sharif* i.e. vicinity of the mosques of 'Mecca and Madina',<sup>10</sup> which also have aristocratic look with religious atmosphere. The Suhrawardi *khanqahs* were located in a wider area, with separate accommodation for the inmates and visitors, unlike the *jama'at khana* of the Chishtis. There were no open invitations for food in their *khanqahs*. However, they generously entertained their guests. The terms, *khanqah* and *jama'at khana* are used interchangeably and almost mean the same thing. Thus, it would be convenient to use the term *khanqah* for both.

The *khanqah* saw several stages in evolutionary history. According to Ibn Taimaiyah, the first house for the mystics was built in Basra, but the popularity of the *khanqah* and *rabtra* (derived from Arabic root *rabata*, which means to bind or to attach etc.) started at a later period.<sup>11</sup> At a later stage, the tombs of Shaikhs were preserved, so that the followers and the admirers might pay their respect to the tombs of their masters. In the final stage, the presence of the tomb led to the association of the *khanqah* with it.

The Chishti *khanqahs* in India were located at prominent places, a little away from the urban activities. Khwaja Muin al-Din Chishti had his *khanqah* at Ajmer,<sup>12</sup> which was politically and economically an important place. Shaikh Qutub al- Din's *khanqah* was in Delhi<sup>13</sup> and so was the *khanqah*



of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Aulia.<sup>14</sup> On the bank of river Sutlej, half way between Ferozepur and Bahawalpur the famous *khanqah* of Baba Farid was located. Shaikh Burahan al-Din who was an elite having privileges of birth, education, nobility and job opportunity and took to mysticism had his *khanqah* at Daulatabad,<sup>15</sup> which was strategically and politically very significant to the extent that Muhammad bin Tughlaq attempted to make it his capital.

The inmates of *khanqah* consisted of people from all streams, but three important categories predominated. First were the scholars, who could have their search and animosities of scholastic logic resolved through mysticism only. Thus, Badr al-Din Ishaque went to Baba Farid to clear his doubts, which could not be resolved earlier, despite the best of his efforts and meetings with numerous scholars and reading a large number of books. He settled at the *khanqah* of Baba Farid.<sup>16</sup>

Second category included merchants, who were burdened with their material goods and were looking for the peace of mind. The Kirmani family was one such part of the vicinity of the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din. Shaikh Nasir al-Din also came from such a rich family. In the third category were people frustrated with inner conflicts and their heart aching due to atrocities and self-seeking external world. Government servants who were frustrated with worldly power, oppression and increasing demands of the state system also were regular visitors who shed hatred and developed

kindness, which they reflected while dealing with the people. Thus, Hamid, while in the service of Tughril got himself freed from him, when the latter declared himself Sultan Mughis al-Din, by directly confronting him to free him and joined the *khanqah* of Baba Farid. Similarly, Kara, who was in the service of Ala al-Din, when he was a prince, took shelter in Shaikh Nizam al-Din's *khanqah*. Amir Khusrau himself wanted to give up government service and devote full time to spirituality. In addition, there were a large number of visitors at the *khanqah*.

It is observed that in the *khanqahs* two types of people were staying i.e. '*musafirs*' and '*muqims*'. *Musafirs* were travellers and *muqims* were habitants. *Musafirs* came there before 'asr' i.e. late after noon prayer. He also notes that in every *khanqah* the Shaikh and murids had their *haweli* to live, *musalla* for prayer and a place for gathering.<sup>17</sup>

The inmates of the *khanqah* shared the responsibilities of running the *khanqah*. The duties included cleanliness of the *khanqah*, the kitchen, and the mosque, the provision of water for '*wazu*' i.e. ablution, spreading of prayer carpets, provision of fuel in the kitchen, preparation of food and its distribution, making of *tawiz*, maintenance of stores, receiving and distribution of '*futuh*', looking after visitors and guests etc., in addition to writing of *khilafat-nama* which was done by senior disciples. Moreover, teaching *Quran*, *Hadith* and other religious books were the most important functions. Calling

of 'azan,' and leading prayer five times in the *khanqah* respectively done by 'Muazzin' and 'Imam' were other regular activities. Certain persons were assigned the tasks to recite religious verses and couplets.

In the *khanqah* itself, the power structure was visible, mainly based on spiritual attainment and as per the tasks allotted to the inmates. Persons allotted the tasks of personal attendance of the Shaikh were important. Khwaja Ahmed Siwistani performed the task of arranging water for ablution (*wazu*) i.e. providing water for cleanliness before prayer to Baba Farid.<sup>18</sup> Sometimes, he washed the clothes of Baba Farid, which was done after performing ablution.<sup>19</sup> Shaikh Farid had appointed Isa to look after his private affairs. Isa, also used to send the Shaikh's wives to him according to their turn, so that no injustice occurs in marital relationship.<sup>20</sup> Mulana Badr al-Din Ishaque was in his personal attendance.

For personal attendance of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, Iqbal and Mubashir were appointed. Prayer carpet or *musalla* was carried to the mosque by Khwaja Abu Bakr and thus he was known as Abu Bakr Musalladar.<sup>21</sup> Initially, Nur al-Din Kirmani was assigned the task of provision for ablution and washing off clothes of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, which was later assigned to Iqbal. Iqbal is also seen as receiving and distributing '*futuh*'. Shaikh Burhan al-Din was in charge of the kitchen. Amir Khusrau was close to the Shaikh, who succeeded in obtaining pardon for Shaikh Burhan al-Din, when he was

banished from the *khanqah*. Syed Khamosh Kirmani, Amir Khwurd's uncle had a party of musicians for sama.<sup>22</sup>

The *khanqah* life completely revolved around the Shaikh, as he was the centrifugal as well as centripetal force in the *khanqah*. With some variations, Shaikhs followed their daily routine meticulously. The foremost duty of the Shaikh was prayer and meditation. Baba Farid remained in '*sajdah*' for two hours after the Morning Prayer; Shaikh Nizam al Din's night lamp was lit till late night, showing that he was mediating at night. Attending to visitors, was another important function. Baba Farid met visitors after the '*zohar*' prayer and would not retire unless every one was attended. Shaikh Nizam al-Din started meeting people after sunrise till midday. In the afternoon, after the '*zohar*' prayer also, he kept meeting people. It kept continuing till night except at the prayer time.

One day, Akhi Siraj sent away a person who had come to meet the Shaikh at the time of his midday rest. Baba Farid came to the dream of Shaikh Nizam al-Din and said: "If you have nothing to give to a visitor at least receive him cordially." The Shaikh gave instructions to the inmates that whenever a visitor came, he should be woken up.<sup>23</sup> Whenever the Shaikh was unwell, the inmates of *khanqah* and disciples were worried, as he was the central figure of the *khanqah*.

The *khanqah* had an open kitchen and hospitality was one of the most

important aspects of the *khanqah*. The tradition quoted by Shaikh in this regard is as follows:<sup>24</sup>

"If someone visits a living man and gets nothing from him to eat, it is as if he has visited the dead".

If, nothing was available, the visitor could be offered water to drink. The expenditure of the kitchen was made out of '*futuh*' i.e. unasked for charity. The monasteries were visited by various kinds of people and every one from king to beggar was welcome and at least notionally treated alike. For instance, Jamal Qiwam reports that Shaikh Nizam al-Din's *khanqah* was visited by all kinds of people -ordinary persons, amirs, princes, officials, traders etc.<sup>25</sup> However, prayer took precedence over attending to people. Once, Firoz Shah Tughlaq visited Shaikh Nasir-al-Din, who was then taking a nap. When he was woken up, he performed ablution and prayer. The Sultan who was still waiting out side, addressing Tatar Khan, an official, remarked: "I am not a king, he is the real king."<sup>26</sup>

Besides Muslims, Hindus including, untouchables visited the *khanqah*. In fact, the untouchables saw there was no discrimination, flocked in groups. *Yogis* also came to the Shaikh. Baba Farid appears to have learned and practiced *yoga*.<sup>27</sup>

The *khanqah* some times became so crowded, that the Shaikh asked their disciples to shorten their stay. Many of the senior disciples, as a result,

constructed their homes near the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din. In the *khanqah*, the rule was 'first greet, then eat, then talk'.<sup>28</sup> Food was served to all visitors without discrimination. The guests were helped in washing their hands.<sup>29</sup> The Shaikh not only ensured service of food to the guests, but also attended to each one of them and their problems.

Barani reports about Shaikh Nizam al-Din *khanqah* as under:<sup>30</sup>

"There was provision for all the visitors, murids, travellers, repentants etc. for *wazu* (ablution) and *namaz* (prayer). There were attendants to provide water to them for *wazu*, facilitating *namaz*, under each *chabutra* (shaded platform)."

Sometimes, Sufis from other parts and other silsilahs also visited each other. Shaikh Rukn al-Din Multani of Shuhrwardi order often visited Shaikh Nizam al-Din. Once, when he came from the court to meet the Shaikh, he had a fresh ablution saying that he could not meet the Shaikh in the same ablution with which he met the Sultan.<sup>31</sup> The respect was reciprocated by host Shaikh as well.

Knowledge was necessary for a *durvesh*. Baba Farid's *khanqah* was a great learning centre. He considered dedicated study of the *Quran* was essential for awakening spiritual sensibilities. His *jama'at khana* was always filled with the voice of reciting *Quran*. Shaikh Nizami al-Din was asked to do '*hifz*' i.e. memorising *Quran* by heart by Baba Farid, which he did later.

He also learned *Awa'rif-ul-Ma'rif*, the *tamhidat*, *fiqh* (law) and *Shari'at* there.

At his *khanqah*, there were senior disciples who were erudite scholars in their own right. Maulana Shams al-Din Yahya, Maulana Fakhr al-Din Zarradi, Maulana Ala al-Din were experts in '*usul*' (juristic principles), '*fiqh*' (law), Islamic law and '*kashf*' respectively. Shaikh Nasir al-Din was an expert in external science and Qazi Muhi al-Din Kashani had extensive knowledge of '*Hadith*'.<sup>132</sup>

The senior disciples instructed the juniors.<sup>33</sup> When one group completed their training, they were to train the new entrant. The Shaikh concentrated on the education and the training of the senior disciples. They were trained rigorously and some became *Khalifas* of the Shaikh. Maulana Ghauthi Shattari has reported that Shaikh Nizam al-Din had appointed 700 *Khalifas* and sent them to various parts of the country.

The people of the *khanqah* i.e. *ahl-i- khanaqah* were divided into the permanent (*muqiman*) and travellers (*musafirin*). The travellers stayed for a maximum of three days. If they overstayed they had to help the inmates in their day-to-day work. The permanent residents of the *khanqah* were divided into three classes viz. the *ahl-i khidmat*, *ahl-i suhbat* and *ahl-i khilawat* according to their spiritual standing and the nature of duties assigned to them.<sup>34</sup>

Strict discipline was maintained in the *khanqah* and elaborate rules

were laid down for the guidance of the inmates: how to talk to the Shaikh ; how to deal with visitors; how to sit in the *khanqah*; how to walk; how and when to sleep; what dress to wear and on similar other topics minute instructions were given to the people of *khanqah*.<sup>35</sup>

Delhi was a nucleus of large network of *khanqah* organization, life as well as of political organization. Its existence was not limited to being an administrative capital that rose and fell with the fate of the Sultanate. It also inhabited three of the most famous Chishti saints, Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya and Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i Delhi who together covered almost the entire period of the Sultanate, dealing with twelve Sultans of the Sultanate period. The urbanisation of Delhi during this period is partly attributed to its being the capital and efforts of the Sultan by their construction and partly attributed to the presence of the Sufi saints in the city to whom people of all walks of life visited, for blessings and spiritual guidance, resulting into greater interaction and intermingling of people, new settlements and expansion of trade, crafts and other business activities.

The enforcement materials at *khanqah* came from *futuh* i.e. unasked for gift. This is also to be understood with the concept of *kasb* (earning one's livelihood) and *tawakkul* (trust in God) which are cardinal values of Islam. *Kasb* is a part of *sunna* i.e. the practice or custom of the Prophet. Once a person complained of his poverty to the Prophet, upon which the Prophet



advised him to buy an axe for livelihood. Consequently, the man's fortune changed because *kasb* was viewed as the best means to lead a life of *halal*. In contrast there is *zanbil* (begging) and *futuh* (unasked for charity). The Sufis were busy praying and serving the people and hence most of them were dependent on *futuh*.

The Prophet has said that the most halal food is the one which is gained by earning by own hands. However, Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi recalls that Abu Talib Makki in his famous writing, *Qut al-Qulub*, had reported that labour of one's hand really meant raising of one's hand for begging for food in a state of starvation. He also explains that raising one's hand may mean raising hands in prayer to God.<sup>36</sup>

The Sufis in India, for that matter in South Asia, had distaste for *kasb*. They allowed the men of general learning to leave for their learning work. It was appreciated greatly if anybody gave up property and *kasb* to devote exclusively to prayer. Then, those who are in advance stage of training and are likely to be considered for becoming *Khalifa* were not allowed *kasb*.

Notwithstanding this, there are evidences to show that both Shaikh Muin al-Din<sup>37</sup> and Baba Farid took interest in protecting the agricultural land held by their sons. Shaikh Farid's eldest son Khwaja Nizam al-Din was in the imperial army.<sup>38</sup> However, the Sufis generally kept away from *kasb* and directed their entire energy in prayer and service.

The relatively brisk activities of the *khanqah*, usefully engaged many people within its confines. The *khanqah*, therefore had to subsist on *futuh*. There are evidences that at the *khanqah*, *futuh* was accepted. Large number of men were dependent on the incoming *futuh*. Once, when Shaikh Nizam al-Din observed that some grain was kept for future requirement, he ordered for its immediate disposal. The *futuh* was virtually consumed by the people assembled there in no time.<sup>39</sup> Thus, it is important to note that people around the *khanqah* or in the *jama'at khana* did not feel the need to work.

The *khanaqah* provided impetus for urban expansion and preservation, in so far as all Chishti Shaikhs moved away from the center of political power and the hub of social activity and established their *khanqahs* in the vicinity of the peripheral limits of the existing urban center.<sup>40</sup> The urban conglomeration is a subsystem within a larger one, formed by economic and social apparatus and the cultural milieu of a civilization. It reflects this totality and functions within it. The Indian formation did not have the juridical distinctions between the town and the country.<sup>41</sup> Smaller associations determined by kinship and by residence were thus the foci of medieval existence. However, Bruce B. Lawrence holds that a potential famous Sufi had to be an urban, as an urban background is a prerequisite to being a Sufi of repute.<sup>42</sup> His views, thus, presupposes the existence of urban society and urban culture which is not in conformity with the view that there was no clear distinction between the

urban and the rural. A holistic view would be that there were some areas which were qasbas and were more urban than other areas and some sections of society were urban in culture due to birth, education, social ethos etc.

The *kanqah*, not only encouraged the establishment of buildings and monuments, but also ushered in economic and social regeneration to the newly inhabited site. For instance, Ghiyaspur was away from the city life before Shaikh Nizam al-Din came and settled. However, in due course of time it became a center of activities, as settlement started partly to cater to the requirement of larger numbers of visitors and partly due to their possible attachment towards the Shaikh and the *khanqah*. The Shaikh was highly popular and the people came to see and seek advice and blessings from him. Ghiyaspur, eventually, became so popular that Shaikh Nizam al-Din once had contemplated to move out of there.

Since, urban centers did not spring into being in one rapid move, these activities of the Sufis went a long way in enlarging not only the spatial horizons of the city, but its commercial faculties as well. It is seen that towns and cities were composite entities that were 'planted' or 'founded' more than once, and in many phases. Now, wherever shrines of important Sufis exist, urbanization has taken place in the vicinity. During the lifetime of the respective Sufis, increasing habitation nearby their *khanqahs* could not be ruled out.

The *langar* and functions organized at the *khanqah* might have had huge material requirements, for supplying which artisans and traders would have been visiting the *khanqah*. Thus the institution of the *khanqah* depended on commercialized craftsmen, artisan and traders who supplemented its day to day requirements, thus introducing a dynamic force in augmenting the volume of output and carrying the economy forward.

The Shrines of the saints are visited by large number of people. These have become institutions in themselves. Urbanization has taken its place in those areas. Commercial activities have sprung up. For instance, the '*dargahs*' or shrines of Shaikh Nizam al-Din and Shaikh Qutub al-Din have become important urban centers of Delhi, namely Nizamuddin<sup>43</sup> and Mehrauli. Futuh, qawwali, and langars are still prevelant. To give an example, at the shrine of Shaikh Qutub al - Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, langar is distributed twice daily i.e. approximately at 11 AM in the morning and 6 PM in the afternoon.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the shrines helped in the foundation and expansion of commercial and urban centers.

The medieval commercial communities used a classical pattern of offerings which played an important role to strengthen the *khanqah* and was responsible for the spatial growth of the city. In this way, the merchants were not only acquiring religious merit but were also responsible for establishment of new neighborhoods, besides being involved in political

relations outside the neighborhoods.

The *khanqah* provided a safe location to live, to the distant travelers and merchants, and thus, encouraged urban settlement. A traveler desiring to stay in a *khanqah* was expected to arrive there before the 'asr' i.e. later afternoon prayer. If he arrived late, he was advised to pass the night in some mosque and join the *khanqah* the next day. As soon as a guest arrived, he was expected to offer his prayer and then greet the residents of the *khanqah*. The servants of the *khanqah* were instructed to show extreme hospitality to all guests and were strictly warned against ridiculing those who were ignorant of the mystic customs and conventions.

It was common among commercial communities to relocate geographically and to alternate between long distance trade and political centres. The location of the *khanqah* in the periphery of the urban centre enabled it to function as a buffer between the villages and the distant government. The *khanqah* served as a meeting place for people from different walks of life and thus, bred an atmosphere of goodwill in the society. These provided an opportunity to enrich and further human development.

The *khanqah*, provided like the marketplace, the common meeting ground for the urban intelligentsia and the rural pastoralist, thereby functioning as an agent of cross-cultural interactions. Thus, not only did the *khanqah* promote urban expansion, but also gave urbanization a visibly distinct

character. This negates the view of writers who view 'urban growth in the context of medieval India to be seen as an imperial device to promote political stability and material progress.'<sup>45</sup> These *khanqahs* provided accommodation and shelter to those mystics who had no accommodation of their own, besides providing the Sufis an opportunity of mixing with each other and regulating their life and conduct. In the process, they got an opportunity of mutual criticism and rectification.

Both Chishti *jama'at khana* and Suhrawardi *khanqahs* were great religious power centres - centres of learning, pilgrimage and spiritual attainment. People of all sections visited these for seeking solace, guidance and blessings from the Shaikhs. Nobles, amirs, princes visited the *khanqahs* and returned contented. It facilitated inter group contacts, thereby creating a new paradigm for pluralism, hybridization and inter group cooperation and competition. Moreover, it also functioned as a power centre, often complementary to the political power centre i.e. the Sultanate, except on certain occasions. These certain occasions, however, were vital to determining the power equations between the Sufi and the Sultanate.

## NOTES

1. Syed Ziauddin Sajjadi, *Maqadanai Bar Mabani-i-Irfan Tasawwuf*, Simat, Teheran, 1372 SH, Vol.-I, p.256
2. Fruits of Wild Thorny plants of North West Region.
3. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*, p.74, Amir Khwurd Siyar al-Auliya, Lahore, 1978, pp.86,209 etc.
4. Mohammad Jamal Qiwam, *Qiwam al - Aqaid*, as reproduced in *Qande Farsi*, Cultural House of Iran, Delhi, May1994, pp.73-75.
5. Shaikh Jamali, *Siyar al-Arifin*, ed. Delhi, 1311 A. H./1893 A.D., p.129.
6. *Fawa'id al- Fu'ad*, p.223; Shaikh Jamali, *Siyar al- Arifin*, pp.114.
7. *Siyar al-Arifin*, p.129.
8. Ibid, p.129.
9. Ibn Battuta, *Rihlah*, 1928, II, p.61.
10. Construction and beautification of *Haram Sharif* of Mecca and Madina in late '80's and early 90's' has added grandeur and aristocratic look with costly Persian carpets spread all over.
11. K.A. Nizami, *Aspects of Khanqah Life*, p.51
12. Mir Khwurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, Foundation of Islamic Publications, Lahore, 1398 AH/1978 AD, p.27.
13. Ibid, p.63.
14. Ibid, pp. 118-122.
15. Ibid, p.287-289.
16. Ibid, p.170
17. Dr. Syed Ziauddin, Sajjadi, *Muqadamai Bar Mabani-i Irfan-Tasawwuf*, Simat,

Teheran, 1372 SH, Vol.-I, p.256.

18. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.86.
19. Ibid, p.12.
20. Ibid, p. 194.
21. Ibid, pp. 204-5.
22. Ibid, p.219.
23. Ibid, p.129.
24. *Fuwa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p.36
25. Jamal Qiwan, *Qiwam al-Aqaid*, as reproduced in *Qandi Farsi*, May1994, Chapter-VI, p.73.
26. S.A. Hussayn, *Jawam al-Kalim*, ed. S. Ata Hussayn, Kanpur, 1356 AH/1978AD, p.219.
27. Baba Farid is known to be practicing 'yoga' regularly. He also practiced '*ardha-mukhogami*' i.e. his legs tied on a branch of the tree and face down over a well, with his eyes fixed in the water in the well.
28. *Fuwa'id al-Fu'ad*, p.77
29. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.413.
30. Zia-al-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p.344.
31. *Qiwam al-Aqaid*, MS, p.177.
32. *Siyar al-Auliya*, pp.268, 270,289 and 318.
33. Zia-al-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p.334.
34. K.A. Nizami, "Some Aspects of Khanqah Life", *Studia Islamica*, pp.59-61, *Mislah-ul-Hislaya*, pp.120-21
35. Najib u'd-din Abd al-Qadir Suhra Wardi, *Adad-ul-Muridin Awarif-ul-Marif*, Part-I, see Chapter XIII to XX.



36. Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, *Awarif al-Marif*, p.298.
37. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.63.
38. Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddis Dehlawi, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p.82.
39. The Indian Historical Review, "Ideas on kash in South Asian Sufism", p.-115.
40. For instenice, Shaikh Nizam al-Din settled at lesser known place i.e. Ghiyaspur.
41. Ref. to Proceedings on UGC seminar on Urban History, see S.C. Mishra's, article on Some Aspects on Self Admitting Institutes in Medieval Indian Towns.
42. Bruce B. Lawrence, p.104.
43. The presence of Shaikh Nizam al-Din and existence of his *khanqah*, led to new habitation in the area, in addition to large number of visitors, for provision and arrangement at the *khanqah*, business would have flourished in the area. It became a part of the urban centre. After his death, he was buried at a secluded place, close to his *khanqah*, but, it became a place for pilgrimage with new settlement; Influmential people like Humayun, Rahim Khan-i-Khan, Jahan-Ara, Sultan Mubarak Shah also were buried near his 'shrine'. Consequently the place has become so important that there exists a Railway station named after him i.e. Nizamuddin Railway station.
44. Personally visited and observed and also interviewed Khadim Shams al-Haq, 82 yrs. old, engaged in the service of the shrine for over 50 yrs.

## SUFIS AND THE SULTANATE: RELATIONSHIP OF COMPATIBILITY AND COOPERATION

The Sufis, specially the Chistis, in order to maintain their visible independence, tried to alienate themselves from the state system. But while, doing so, they still provided tacit support to the activities of the state in a covert manner. The Sufis' support was also manifested at times of crises, military campaigns and welfare measures undertaken by the Sultanate. The Sultans on the other hand, made conscious attempts to align themselves with the Sufis. Towards this endeavour, they bent backwards to show reverence to the Sufis and ensured such reverence to adequately publicised. They also made recurring attempts at endowing gifts including land grants to the Sufis as a token of respect towards them, which the Sufis might or might not accept. They also made persistent attempts to enter into matrimony with the Sufis to elevate their position in popular perceptions.

The location of the *khanqahs* of the Sufis in the central and strategic places also had its bearing on the relationship of the Sufis with the state. The *khanqah* of Muin al-Din Chishti was located in Ajmer, which was the capital of Prithviraj Chauhan, probably the most powerful ruler of the northern India of the time. His *Khalifa* Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki settled in Delhi, where the founders of the Sultanate had their capital. Delhi then became the hub of

political activities. His successor Baba Farid al-Din Ganj- i Shagr had his *khanqah* at Ajodhan, which was of great strategic importance, politically and economically, though it was away from the political capital. Mir Khwurd reports that the *jama' t khana* of Baba Farid was situated on a main route and attracted numerous visitors from all spheres of life – the scholars, the merchants, the government servants, the artisans, the Sufis and the Qalandars.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya was located at Delhi. During the lifetime of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, thirteen rulers ruled over Delhi. Most of them revered him, while a few had hostile attitude towards him. His *khalifa* Shaikh Nasir al-Din Mahmud had also settled in Delhi and faced the wrath of the Sultanate. Another *Khalifa*, Shaikh Burhan al-Din Gharib went to the South and settled at Khuldabad, which was close to political centre in the South. His shrine was attached so much importance that even the last powerful Mughal King, Aurangzeb was deliberately buried near its vicinity. Thus, the geo-political compulsions did not allow the Shaikhs to completely be away from the Sultanate. Instead, from time to time, they extended their tacit and indirect support to it.

The first of the instances in regard to the tacit support of the Sufis for Muslim rule was evident during the Ghori advent. Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya believed that “Shaikh Muin al-Din Chishti reached India before the Turkish conquest and settled at Ajmer which was the seat of Chauhan power

(Hindustan was ruled by Pithaura Raj or Prithviraj, at that time). Due to adverse comments from Pithaura, the Shaikh had prophesised his defeat by the army of Islam, which materialized on the victory of Muhammad Ghorī over him. The Shaikh's preference for the Ghaurid conquest is clear, for possibly, he viewed that, as the victory of the army of Islam<sup>2</sup>. Also implicit in it is the assumption that victory was the outcome of the Shaikh's benediction.

The support towards their favorite Sultanate continued by his successors as well. For instance, Mir Khwurd quotes Shaikh Nizam al-Din-Auliya and states that when Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar, Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria and Shaikh Jalal al-Din Tabrezi were at Multan during the reign of Nasir al-Din Qubacha, the army of nonbelievers had gheraoed the *Qila* of Multan. Qubacha went to the Shaikhs to seek their blessings for the removal of the trouble, upon which Shaikh Qutab al-Din Bakhtiyar gave an arrow to Qubacha and said: این را عمیا جانب لشکر کافر فرست "aim at the enemy at night". Qubacha did as instructed and when morning dawned, none from the enemy camp was available, as all of them had dispersed.<sup>3</sup> This reiterates that the Sufis had often supported the Sultanate as they regarded it as Islamic. It also indicates that the Sultans regarded the Sufis as the saviors of the Sultanate, at the time of distress. In an identical incident, Bahlul Lodi received a spiritually treated stick at the Saikh's shrine, which helped disperse the enemy.<sup>4</sup> This indicates the folkloric belief that the Sufis, even after death possessed spiritual and

miraculous power, from which the Sultan or for that matter the people could benefit.

Yet another identical incident occurred much later, when Kachlu Khan rebelled against Sultan Mohammad Shah and marched with his army towards Delhi. The Sultan asked Dabir, a devotee of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, on the night before the attack, if he had brought anything from the Shaikh at that trying time<sup>5</sup>. Dabir told the Sultan that the Shaikh had advised:<sup>6</sup>

که اگر کسی را مهمی پیش آید. باید که شب آن به حق مشغول شود، چون  
نزدیک صبح شود فلان آیت بخواند و به سوی آن خصم دمد و سوار شود، به جنگ  
پیونده، خدائی تعالی آن خصم را مقهور گرداند و فتح و نصرتش بخشند.

“For such difficult occasion, a person needs to pray the whole night and at dawn, recite certain specific verses as specified by the Shaikh and the one, who did this, would be victorious.”

The Sultan accordingly, prayed the whole night, while instructing his army to be ready all the while for the fight. But when the battle began, the Sultan faced initial reverses. He asked Dabir the reasons for such reverses, on which Dabir counselled the Sultan asking him not to worry.<sup>7</sup> At that time, when Kachlu Khan in a relaxed mood was watching his success, an arrow hit him on the neck and he fell on the ground losing his life which caused chaos in his army. The Sultan then led the onslaught and defeated the rebellious army.<sup>8</sup> Thus, his faith in the Shaikh and obedience towards him was perceived to have led to his victory.

Though, Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shagr attempted to keep away from the Sultanate and advised his *Khalifas* to do so, he could not cut himself off completely from the Sultanate. Successive Sultans sought his blessings, time and again, in their military campaigns. Mir Khwurd, while quoting Shaikh Nizam al-Din mentions that Sultan Nasir al-Din, while in a military campaign proceeding towards Multan and Uchch, sought the blessings of Baba Farid. The whole of his army also went to see Baba Farid.<sup>9</sup> He narrates the incident as under:<sup>10</sup>

آستين شيخ شيوخ العالم را از بامی جانب كوچه بيا ويختند خلق می آمدند و می بوسیدند و می رفتند تا آنهم پاره پاره شد . آنگاه در مسجد در آمد مریدان را فرمود شما گرد برگردمن باشید تا خلق درون حلقه نیا ید هم از دور سلامی گفتند و باز گردند . مریدان همچنان کردند تا یکی فراشی پیری بیامد و از دایره مریدان بگذشت و دریای شيخ افتاد و پای شيخ بگرفت و بکشید و ببوسید و بگفت شيخ فرید تنگ می آئی ... شيوخ العالم ... معذرت بسیار کرد .

“...A piece of Baba’s cloth was hanging in a stick which was being kissed by people to the extent that it was formed into pieces. At that time Baba Farid came to the mosque and asked his *murids* to form a human chain around him, so that he could greet and wish them from a distance. An old carpenter, in the meanwhile, managed to sneak into and kissed the feet of the Shaikh asking him as to why was he afraid of people of God. Baba Farid asked for his forgiveness.”

Further he narrates about the Sultan’s seeking blessings as under:<sup>11</sup>

“Once Sultan Nasir al-Din while passing through Naharwala wanted to go to Ajodhan to pay regards to the Shaikh. Ulugh Khan, later Sultan Giyas al-Din and then governor of the area, said that as the army was too large, there could be scarcity of water on the way of Ajodhan. So, instead of Sultan, he would go to the Shaikh for obtaining blessing for victory in the expedition and would express regrets for Sultan having not come due to above stated difficulty. Ulugh Khan, being an aspirant of the throne, was keen to obtain the blessing of the Shaikh. He, in his heart, wanted to know the Shaikh’s thought on his aspirations. With the permission of Sultan Nasir al-Din, he took silver coins and the *farman* of four villages and offered the same to the Shaikh. The Shaikh ordered the distribution of the coins among the *durvesh*, but returned the ownership rights of the villages, saying that there were many desirous of the rights of the villages.

The Shaikh also recited a poem on the occasion:

فریدون فرخ فرشته نبود      زعود و زعنبر سرشته نبود  
زداد و دهش یافت آن خسروی      توداد و دهش کن فریدون توئی

‘Faridun (an ancient Iranian king) was not an angel;

He was not a product of wood and ambar (source of fragrance);

He was famous because of

justice and generosity ;

If you show justice and generosity;

You will rise as a Faridun’.

Ulugh Khan was apparently very delighted to hear this. He tied a knot symbolising that he would preserve and obey these words.”

After sometimes, Ulugh Khan became the king as prophesised by the Shaikh. The incident indicates not only the prophecy of kingship of Ulugh Khan, but also an apparent advice to the future Sultans for ‘drawing a course of action’ to rise as a noble Sultan in future.

Thus, Chishtis were supporting the State in several ways and were far from being antagonistic to it. This is further substantiated by the Shaikhs prediction on Ala al-Din’s southern campaign. Between 1309 and 1310, Ala al-Din Khalji’s general Malik Naib marched on the Kakatia Kingdom of Telingana and invaded the Warangal fort. The usual method of communication between the army and the capital collapsed giving rise to considerable anxiety in the city. Turning to *Shaikh al-Mashaikh*, the Sultan sent his messengers requesting his assistance.

This incident is described by the famous historian Zian al-Din Barani in *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi* in the following words:<sup>12</sup>

“Once, the Sultan sent Malik Karabaik and Qazi Moghis al-Din Biyanah to Shaikh Nizam al-Din and asked them to convey to the Shaikh that the Sultan was worried because there was no message from the army of Islam and as the Shaikh had greater concern for Islam than the Sultan had, he



## SUFISM : PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICES

Sufism signifies Islamic mysticism. It is an Islamic way of reaching God, which involves rigorous meditation and prayer, emphasis on inner self rather than external rituals, continuous service towards humanity and renunciation of the worldly pleasures. In Islamic world, it is popularly known as '*Tasawwuf*', while Western writers have termed it as 'Islamic mysticism'.

The genesis of Sufism lies in the *Quran* itself which reveals, "God is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward."<sup>1</sup> It also reveals, "Wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah."<sup>2</sup> (This is not to be confused with shape or figure). Here the emphasis is God alone and everything else is perishable and of no worth. Therefore, Shibli states that Sufis are those who do not see anything other than Allah in both the worlds.<sup>3</sup>

The Sufis imitate and derive inspiration from Prophet Mohammad in terms of morality, piety and religiosity. The Sufis, because of their mystical knowledge and experience, could understand the sayings of the Prophet correctly. Therefore, Sarraj writes that 'God reveals the truth behind the language of *Quran* to those whom He loves and who are true Sufis'.<sup>4</sup>

There exist conflicting theories regarding the origin of the term 'Sufi' and that of Sufism as a socio-religious and philosophical movement. Al-Hujwiri while dealing with its origin states:<sup>5</sup>

through his spiritual power could throw some light on the welfare of the army. The Sultan had directed them to convey the exact details of the conversation with the Shaikh. They conveyed the message to the Shaikh and the Shaikh narrated about the victories of some Sultans. When the messengers asked about the victory of the present expedition, the Shaikh said:

این فتح چه باشد که ما فتح های دیگر را امید داریم-

‘This victory is nothing, as I am interested in much greater victories.’

Thus, the messengers happily returned and gave the exact details of conversation to the Sultan. Sultan Ala al-Din was delighted, as he knew that his army had conquered ‘Arankal’ and achieved the goal. He took out his turban and said that these words of the Shaikh were auspicious. He also said that when the Shaikh uttered those words, Arankal would have been conquered and that he could foresee many more victories. The same day Malik Naib sent the good news of victory over Arankal through a *fatah-nama*, which was read out at the time of Friday prayer. The people in the city, thereafter, celebrated the victory. The Sultan thereafter became a strong believer of the Shaikh.”

There are evidences to show that the Sufis participated and prayed during the warfare. They also advised the Sultans on the methodology of expedition on warfare. For instance when Sultan Hussain of Jaunpur came

to invade Delhi and laid siege to it, Bahlul Lodi stood bare headed and prayed at the tomb of Bakhtiyar Kaki throughout the night. It is said that he received a staff from a heavenly person in the morning and then attacked the enemy successfully, as a result of which Sultan Hussain's army was defeated and forced to retreat to Jaunpur.

Not only the Chishtis, but the Sufis of *Qadiriyya silsilah*, also helped in military campaign. For instance, Shah Nur al-Din, who founded the *Ni'Malullahi* order of *Shi'i* Sufis had sent a crown to the Bahmanid Sultan, Shihab al-Din Ahmed I (1422 A.D.- 1436 A.D.). His blessing to the Sultan is believed to have enabled him to defeat his brother Taj al-Din Firuz. Further, on the Sultans request for sending his son, the Sufi sent his grandson, Nuru'llah who later settled in Bidar. He was given the title of *Malik al-Mashaikh*.

In the northwest frontier, *Naqshabandi* order had supported their favorite Sultans and Princes. Khwaja Nasir al-Din, to whom the Indian *Naqshabandiyas* trace their origin, had blessed Timurid Prince, Sultan Abu Sa'id in his invasion against Samarqand in 1451 AD. However, he had attached the condition that the Prince would promote welfare activities in the region. The son of the Shaikh also, similarly, protected the grandson of Abu Sa'id, when Sultan Mahmud attacked Samarqand.

Further, when Ibrahim Lodi fought Babur, he took Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi and Shaikh Abu'l Fatah in the campaign. The latter deserted him

and came back to Agra. The Sultan had taken them by force, as it was involuntary. The desertion of the Sufi probably meant the withdrawal of their support and blessing, as a result of which the Sultanate collapsed, paving the way for the Mughal rule.

The support, blessings and prayer of the Sufis for the Sultans' victory in campaigns and otherwise were considered extremely important for the Sultans, who also reciprocated by their respect towards the Sufis by offering their daughters in marriage and by '*futuh*' i.e. unasked for gifts.

Once, Shaikh Qutub al-Din is said to have told the then Sultan of Delhi that if a saint gives *dua* (blessing) to a person, the person is blessed with unbounded happiness in life; if however, the person displeases a saint and evokes his wrath, then he is doomed, meaning thereby that it was the duty of the Sultan to nurture an amicable relationship between the Sufis and the State. Thus, the Sultans tried to obtain moral support from the Sufis by above measures.

The Sultanate's reverence for the Sufis in response to reverence of the masses towards the Sufis is depicted in the incident when Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki decided to leave Delhi and accompany Shaikh Muin al-Din to Ajmer. The people of Delhi received this news with a heavy heart and when the two saints set out for Ajmer, they followed them for miles. Sultan Iltutmish also followed them. The people cried '*Zar-o-qatar*' and the Sultan

requested Shaikh Qutub al-Din to stay back in Delhi, which the Shaikh obliged.

Mir Khwurd explains the incident in the following words:<sup>13</sup>

“Once, *Shaikh al-Mashaikh* (Shaikh Nizam al-Din) mentioned that when Shaikh Muin al-Din came from Ajmer to Delhi. Shaikh-Nizam al-Din Soghra was the *Shaikh al-Islam* of Delhi. Both were friends and when the former went to meet the latter, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Soghra was getting something constructed in his lawn. He lacked in his usual warmth. Shaikh Muin al-Din asked him, if he had some worries. The Shaikh replied that he was the same warm hearted, but he had left a *murid* in the city because of which *Shaikh al-Islam* had no importance greater than that of a grain of barley. Shaikh Muin al-Din smiled and promised that he would take Qutub al-Din back to Ajmer and he need not worry any more. At that time, Shaikh Qutub al-Din had become immensely popular and people of all walks of life came to him.”

Mir Khwurd further reports:<sup>14</sup>

“Shaikh Muin al-Din told Shaikh Qutub al-Din:

بابا بختیار ہم یک بار چنین مشہور شدی کہ خلق از دست تو شکایت  
کردن گرفت ازینجا برخیز و در اجمیر بیا و بنشین من پیش تو بایستم

‘You have become so popular that people have started complaining about you and hence you should come with me to Ajmer and sit there, before me.’

Shaikh Qutub al-Din said that he could not sit before him. Then, they both left for Ajmer. However, when the people of the city knew about this, they were sad and baffled. They started following the Shaikhs along with Sultan Shams al-Din (Iltutmish). They took the sand on which Shaikh Qutub al-Din placed his foot as *tabarruk* and wept madly. Shaikh Muin al-Din, on seeing the situation, asked Shaikh Qutub al-Din to stay back as the people were sad on his leaving Delhi. He further said that it could not be proper for him to make the people sad and then gave away the city of Delhi to his custody. The Shaikh accompanied by the Sultan came back to his place in Delhi.”

Thus, the Chishti Shaikhs were not totally unmindful of the wishes and expectations of the State as well as of the people. Though Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki did not accept the post of ‘*Shaikh al-Islam*’ offered to him by Iltutmish, he or his mentor Shaikh Muin al-Din acceded to the request of the Sultan and the people to stay back in Delhi. In fact, he extended his support to the Sultan in the construction of the *Hauz-i Shamsi* (a tank built to overcome the water shortage in Delhi).

During the rule of Jalal al-Din Khaliji, Shaikh Nizam al-Din had attained fame. The Sultan offered him some villages and orchards, which he politely refused. The Sultan then thought of visiting the Shaikh un-informed. On learning this, the Shaikh left for Ajodhan immediately.<sup>15</sup> This shows that the

Sultan revered the Shaikh and looked for his support, blessings and guidance. While the Shaikh had closed his doors for the Sultan, he could not restrain the nobles, *amirs*, *maliks*, government officers and military men from visiting him to seek his blessings.

During the period of Ala al-Din Khalji the Shaikh's popularity was at its zenith. Barani reports that many *amirs*, warriors, writers, government servants and inhabitants *mahal* of the Sultan had become his *murids*. They engaged themselves in deep prayers, mysticism, fast and generous acts.<sup>16</sup> The Princes, the courtiers and the nobles visited him. Some government officers left their jobs to become his disciples, though the Shaikh discouraged such acts. His popularity and certain courtiers' mischievous suggestions made Ala al-Din jealous and concerned. He sent some spies to see the functioning of the *khanqah*. However, despite his strong measures on market reform, control on assembly of people and regulation of rationing, he did not interfere in the functioning of *langar* in the *khanqah*.

Barani draws the picture as under:<sup>17</sup>

سلطان علاء الدین فرمان داد تا ملوک و امراء و بزرگان و معتبران در  
خانهای یکدیگر نروند و ضیافت ها و جمعیتها نکنند.

“Ala al-Din had used decree to the *amirs*, the nobles and the high officials to not to visit each other; not to gather for functions and festivities without his permission.”

He further explains about the effect as under:<sup>18</sup>

قرانتهای یکدیگر در میان نیارند و خلق را در خانهای خود آمد و شد  
کردن نگذارند و درین فرمان هم چندان مبالغت شد که در خانهای ملوک و امرا  
هیچ بیگانه در نمی شد.

“They were prohibited to develop intimate relations with each other and allow the public to visit their house. The effect of this was so much that there were no visitors to the nobles.”

Describing the response of the nobles he says:<sup>19</sup>

هر همه امراء و ملوک از ترس دور منهیان یا بهش می نهادند و اصلاً  
مجلسی و جمیعتی نمی ساختند و سخن زیادتى گفتند و نمی شنیدند.

“All the times the nobles were scared; they stopped gathering and intermingling with each other (out of fear).”

Zia al-Din Barani informs us that he however never said anything, which would annoy the Shaikh despite gatherings and community eating in the Shaikh's *khanqah*, despite strong warning and instructions for others. Some persons who were inimical to the Shaikh put forth exaggerated version to the jealous King about the number of people visiting and fed at the *khanqah*. But, Ala al-Din merely made enquiries and did precious little to curb this. In the last phase of his reign he became a sincere believer of the Shaikh, though they never met.<sup>20</sup>

The Sultan also wanted to visit the Shaikh and had also sought guidance from the Shaikh in governance of the state. He sent a letter through Khizr



Khan who was the Sultan's dearest son and the Shaikh's *murid*, seeking his guidance in the governance. He also mentioned that 'whatever was considered correct by the Shaikh for the purpose would be put into action forthwith'. However, the Shaikh conveyed that he had nothing to do with the governance. On hearing this, the Sultan was relieved and became happy and a believer of the Shaikh. Then he sent a request to the Shaikh to permit him to visit him. The Shaikh conveyed:

آمدن حاجت نیست من به دعای غیب مشغولم و دعای غیب را اثرها است.

"There was no need for the Sultan to come to him, as he was busy in prayer in absentia, which is more effective."

The Sultan's seeking guidance and blessings and desire to meet the Shaikh puts the Shaikh in a superior position. On the other hand, the Shaikh's mention that he was praying for Sultan indicates that he had tacit support for the Sultanate.

Ala al-Din's respect for the Shaikh is also revealed from the fact that he had sent for Khwaja Muin al-Din Kara, who was in his service when he was a prince and later became a disciple of the Shaikh. The Shaikh was requested to send the Khwaja, but he declined to pressurise. The Sultan did not insist on that out of reverence towards the Shaikh.<sup>21</sup>

In an anecdote, it is reported that Maulana Ala al-Din, a *Qazi* of the Sultan who belonged to Suharawardi order, punished a noble with execution

and was summoned by the Sultan for this action. The *Qazi* went to Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, who prayed for his exoneration as he had acted according to *Shari'at* law. The next day when he was produced before the Sultan, he set him free and conferred a robe of honour on him.<sup>22</sup> It might be possible that the Sultan, on knowing that the Shaikh had prayed for his exoneration, could not have acted incompatibly with the wishes of the Shaikh. As a probable reciprocity, the Shaikh remained in Delhi, when Qutlugh Khwaja invaded the city with a huge army, indicating his moral support for the Sultante.

The Sultanate's respect and importance attached to the Sufis were further enhanced during the Lodi period. There are anecdotes to suggest that Saiyid Abban, who was a Sufi, gave Bahlul Lodi the throne in exchange for some money.<sup>23</sup> It is also possible that due to this bestowal of kingship, Bahlul Lodi would have got inspired to become a king by usurping power. This further could be the reason for his faith in the Sufis due to which he often visited Sama al-Din Suhrawardi to seek his blessings, guidance and support. Many Sufis in Delhi including the latter treated Bahlul with affection. Therefore, when Sultan Hussain wanted to invade Delhi another time, he sought that Sama al-Din, who was then at Bayana, prayed for his success. Sama al-Din however declined to do so and stated that he could not pray for a tyrant's victory over a religious and righteous ruler. This was the turning point for initiation of another treaty after the expiry of the first one, as failure

to get the blessings from the Shaikh could have been construed by Sultan Hasan that victory was far-fetched.

Shaikh Sama al-Din was a leading Sufi, settled in Delhi during the time of Lodhi. His son, Nasir al-Din *Dehlvi* was *Shaikh-ul-Islam* of Delhi during the time of Sikandar Lodi and Ibrahim Lodi. Jamali in *Shams ul-Arifin* gives vivid picture of the same.<sup>24</sup> Bahlul Lodi was a great devotee of Sama al-Din. In one of the lectures of Sama al-Din on different types of people who will be deprived of God's blessings, Bahlul Lodi started weeping on hearing about the fate of the rulers. He had also stated that irrespective of his feelings and sins, he was increasingly becoming a devotee towards the Sufis. Sama al-Din then gave him a *ja-namaz* i.e. prayer carpet, which the Sultan carried on his head with respect and left for his palace happily.<sup>25</sup>

It is also believed that the Shaikh prayed for the success of Sikandar Lodi and on his success held that the new Sultan be known as Sikandar i.e. Alexander of his time.<sup>26</sup> Thus, probably after this, he was known as Sikandar Lodi. It is also presumed by some that the Prince at that juncture had visited the Shaikh, as there was claim to the throne other brothers as well, and he wanted to ensure the support of the Shaikh. This was important as Isa Khan, Bahlul Lodi's cousin had also objected to his enthronement, saying that the son of a gold worker's daughter was not fit to be the king' (as quoted by Firishta). Barbak Shah also opposed this brother's ascendance to the throne

and went to Shaikh Hasan Tahir (d.909A.H./1503A.D.) to express his anguish and to request for praying for his ascendancy. The Shaikh counseled him to obey his brother and forget about overthrowing him. On learning this, Sikandar Lodi was highly impressed by the Saint's integrity and spiritual attainment and it further induced him to visit the Sufi Shaikh.<sup>27</sup> In an anecdote, it has been held that a *durvesh* predicted Prince Nizam's (Sikandar Lodi) victory over his own brother Barbak Shah during their youth in a battle.

Bahlul Lodi and Sikandar Lodi took care to look after the Sufi tombs. Zian al-Din had been appointed to look after the shrines and tombs during Sikandar Lodi. Due to respect shown by the two Lodis, many Sufis visited and settled in Delhi.

The Sufis also lamented the death of a just ruler, particularly if they were devoted to the Shaikhs. In a new disposition, their prestige, position and power might get threatened. Thus, in tune with this, on Sikandar Lodi's death, Jamali wrote the following:

ای سلیمان زماں آہ کجائی آخر  
تا کنم پیش تواز فتنہ دیوان فریاد

“O Soloman of the times, alas! Where are you now?

(Tell me) so that I may place before you an appeal

against the misdeeds of the Diwan.”

This couplet became very popular. This was brought to the knowledge

of Sultan Ibrahim. However, he did not react against him. In fact, he slowly but steadily developed regard for Jamali.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, this reciprocal cordiality and support for each other was evident in their interface and direct or indirect interaction through words or actions. However, there were incidences that reflected aspects of distance, incompatibility and cooperation at the same time. Such, for instance, was the incident of interface between Muhammad Tughlaq and Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar. The incidence also is a glaring example of some Sultans' initial apathy towards the Sufis, which after interaction turned in to respect and appreciation for them.

Once, jealous people (*hasidan*) told Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq certain things about Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar of Hansi, which the Sultan did not accept on its face value. The Sultan sent his *Qazi*, Shaikh Sadi-i Jahan Kamal al-Din to Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar with a *farman* on the grant of a village, with the hope of making the Shaikh concede by luring him with worldly things (*duniyavi lalach*). The Shaikh did not accept the *farman* and asked the *Qazi* to give the grant of the village to others, who had desire for those things. The *Qazi* profusely apologised and went back. On reaching Delhi, the *Qazi* narrated this incident in such a way to the Sultan that the Sultan's heart melted.<sup>29</sup>

However, Mir Khwurd while reporting the incident gives slightly a different version. He reports:<sup>30</sup>

“Once, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, while proceeding towards Hansi halted near the house of Shaikh Munawwar and asked as to whose house was that. People, who were gathered there, informed that the house was that of the Shaikh Munawwar, a *Khalifa* of Shaikh Nizam al - Din Auliya. The Sultan expressed his surprise that despite the fact that Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar was staying there, he had not come to meet him. On returning, the Sultan sent Shaikh Hasan to summon Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar. Shaikh Hasan went to Shaikh Munawwar and waited outside for the Shaikh, as he was praying. The Shaikh after his prayer, due to his spiritual power sensed that someone was waiting for him outside and sent his son to get the visitor. Shaikh Hasan greeted Shaikh Munawwar and said that he was there in the service of the revered Shaikh. He also conveyed to him the purpose of his visit. Shaikh Munawwar asked him: ‘Do I have the right to say something in the matter.’ Shaikh Hasan replied: خیر مرا فرمان است که خدمت شمارا بیرم. ‘No, I have been ordered to take you.’ The Shaikh said : مرا چه محل باشند. ‘Good, then I am going against my own will (*Ikhtiy-ar*).’

Then the Shaikh accompanied Shaikh Hasan, to meet the Sultan; however he walked on foot and did not ride on the horse that had been

sent for him. Shaikh Hasan asked him, 'Why are you troubling yourself by walking.' Shaikh Munawwar refused to ride and said :

من قوت آن دارم که پیاده توانم رفت.

'I have enough strength for walking'."

He further reports:<sup>31</sup>

"The Shaikh then was taken to Delhi. There he was asked to meet the Sultan. On the way to Sultan, he met Firuz Shah, the Prince and the governor of Barbak and told him :

مادرویشانیم آداب در آمد مجلس بادشاهان و سخن گفتن ایشان نمی دانیم  
چنانکه اشارت شود همچنان کرده آید.

'I am not aware how I am supposed to behave in the company of the Sultan.' He asked his advice on this. The Prince advised him suitably. Noor al-Din, the son of the Shaikh was accompanying him and was nervous. The Shaikh sensing it, told him: العظمة والكبرياء لله: 'Greatness and all positions lie with God only.'

On meeting the Sultan, Shaikh Munawwar greeted warmly by '*mushafa*' i.e. holding both hands and shaking. The Sultan was quite impressed and asked him, 'Why did you not meet me at Hansi?' Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar humbly replied:

هانسی بنگرید بعده درویش بچه هانسی - این درویش خود را درین محل نمیداد که ملاقات پادشاهان کند. در گوشه به دعاگوئی پادشاه و کافه اهل اسلام مشغول می باشد - معذور می یابد داشت.

‘Look at Hansi and Hansi’s child (this *durvesh*). This *durvesh* does not consider himself worthy of meeting a Sultan. I was engrossed in my prayer for the Sultan and followers of Islam and hence could not meet you’.”

After this incident, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, who was obviously pleased with Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar’s behavior, sent Zia al-Din and Firoz Shah to give a gift of one lakh *tankas* to the Shaikh. The Shaikh declined to accept the gift and sent them back. They insisted that the Shaikh should accept at least half the amount, but the Shaikh refused again. At this, they said that if the Shaikh did not accept that much as a gift, then what would ‘*Khalq-i Khuda*’ say. But the Shaikh neither budged, nor accepted even one thousand *tankas*. It is further reported:<sup>32</sup>

“The Shaikh said:

درویش را دوسیر کچھری دانگی سیر روغن کفاف باشد۔

‘Two seers of *khichri* and a pao of *rogan* (butter) are enough for the *durvesh* (me).’

However, when the people pressurised him, and Firoz Shah and Zia al-Din said that they had no courage to go back to the Sultan and convey his refusal, he accepted two thousand *tankas*. However, he sent most of the money to the tombs of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya and Shaikh Bakhtiyar Kaki, presented some money to Shaikh Nasir al-Din and got



the rest distributed among the people.”

This incident is a perfect example of the curious balance of relationship, which the Chishti Sufis tried to maintain with the Sultanate. On one hand, the Shaikh made it clear that he was unwilling to visit the Sultan and refused to ride the horse sent for him by the Sultan, as a gesture of his independence from the Sultan. However, on the other hand, when he met the Sultan, he radiated warmth and conversed in a humble manner. In this way, the Shaikh maintained a cordial and amicable relationship with the Sultan, while the fact remained that he wanted to remain at a distance from and independent of the Sultan.

The Sultans also engaged the Sufis in matrimonial alliance, possibly to obtain their moral and spiritual support and to elevate themselves. Baba Farid, it is said, married Sultan Balban's daughter. Mohammad bin Tughlaq had married his daughter, Bibi Rasti to Shaikh Fathullah and the latter stayed with the Sultan for some times, but quite hesitantly. However, when the Sultan knew about his discomfort, he allowed him to go back home. Similarly, Shaikh Sadr al-Din, the son of Shaikh Baha al-Din had married the grand daughter of Iltutmish. In the down south, Shaikh Nuru'llah, (d.1430-31 A.D.) a Qadiriya Shi'i Sufi had married the daughter of Bahmani Sultan, Shihab al-Din Ahmed I (1422-36 A.D.). Bahlul Lodi had also married his daughter to Shah Abdullah Qureshi, who was a majzub and descendant of Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria

and was a saintly person. He became *Shaikh-ul-Islam* of Delhi during Sikandar Lodi. The young son of Abdullah, Shaikh Hasan, had become an important disciple of Shaikh Burhar Chishti of Kalpi. He gained fame as a scholar and poet also.

Matrimonial alliance not only consolidated the position of the Sultanate, but also provided it much needed social sanction and recognition. Further, the Sultans had reasons to consider themselves higher than the *amirs* and nobles and possibly matrimonial alliance with their families would not be on the basis of equality. On the other hand, the Sufis were considered higher in status, most of them being Sayyids and were believed to be the descendants of the Prophet, his companions or great mystics. Moreover, the alliance suited the Sultans, since the Sufis had no political aspirations.

The Sufis believed in '*futuh*' and had little interest in property. Baba Farid and Qutub al-Din Munnawwar had rejected land grants offered to them by the Sultans; though, '*futuh*' was acceptable. Landgrants, probably, amounted to continuous source of income and a string attached to the Sultanate. Shaikh Nizam al-Din was also offered villages and orchards by Sultan Jalal al-Din and Ala al-Din, which he rejected. However, when it came to protect their children's property, they contacted the Sultanate.

Mir Khwurd brings out another incident whereby Shaikh Muin al-Din took a favour from the Sultanate. The anecdote is as under:<sup>33</sup>

“The children of Shaikh Muin al-Din used to live in a village near Ajmer. Once the officials of the Sultanate asked for the ownership papers of their land, which they could not produce. They went to the Shaikh and requested him to go to Delhi and get the same from the Sultan. The Shaikh went to Delhi and stayed with his *murid*, Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and explained to him the purpose of his visit. The latter asked Shaikh Muin al-Din to stay back and himself visited the court of the Sultan, who was pleasantly surprised, as never before Shaikh Qutub al-Din had visited the Sultan. On the other hand, the Sultan himself wanted to visit him, but was not allowed. The ownership of land was given in the court along with a pot full of gold coins.”

When Shaikh Qutub al-Din came back to the *khanqah*, Shaikh Muin al-Din said: این چه کرده پنهان بعزلت بودن بهتر

“What have you done? Keep away and do not reveal yourself”.

Shaikh Qutub al-Din in reply said:<sup>34</sup> از طرف بنده چیزی نیست۔

“I am a small man.” He also said that the resultant effect was not because of him.

Chishti teachings strictly militated against accepting those gifts that could compromise their independence. There were conditions under which such gifts could be accepted. Acceptance of gifts was possible or even necessary, provided that they were unsolicited and not saved up. It was a

generally accepted principle that if any gifts were saved, that would prevent new donations from coming in. Saving also showed lack of 'faith in God' (*tawakkul*), the universal Provider. Greed and covetousness would act as obstacles to the Divine bounty. Borrowing was also frowned upon, since that too would interfere with unsolicited donations.

There were several occasions when they even accepted unasked for gifts (*futuh*) from the State. Earlier we have seen that Shaikh Qutub-al Din accepted a pot full of gold, when he visited the court of Sultan Iltutmish. Baba Farid also accepted gold and silver coins from prince Ulugh Khan. Shaikh Nizam al Din had allowed receipt of gold and silver coins by *durveshes* from Princes when they organized a lunch on their initiation. Moreover, he had accepted '*futuh*' from Khusrau Khan<sup>35</sup> who had killed Sultan Mubarak Khalji and this '*futuh*' had led to a bickering. Mohammad Tughlaq who had incompatible relation with the *Khalifas* of Shaikh Moin al-Din had cordial relation with the descendants of Baba Farid and Shaikh Hamid al-Din Nagouri. In 724 AH/1324 AD, he had given grants of villages in Nagour to the descendants of the latter. In 732 AH/1331-32 AD, he gave another grant for construction of a gate in the *khanqah* of the saint. However, acceptance of *futuh* from the Sultanate was occasional.

Thus, even if they tried to stay away from the Sultans and the State, the Chishtis were often polite, maintained a somewhat amicable relationship

with the Sultans and sometimes accepted '*futuh*'. While supporting the Sultanate or taking support from the Sultanate, they still attempted to maintain some distance from it. For instance, though Nizam al-Din was all-willing to give blessings to Sultan Ala al-Din, he avoided contact with him. Interestingly, though Shaikh Nizam al-Din never met Sultan Ala al-Din, he took his two sons Shadi Khan and Khizr Khan (heir apparent) as his disciples. So, the Chishtis upto Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, simultaneously, maintained a relationship of distance and support with the Sultanate.

There were also certain categories of people who provided a linkage between the Sultanate and the Sufis. Those were Princes, *amirs*, relatives of the Sultans and visitors to the court and the *khanqahs*. The most important of the intermediaries were the Princes.

Ala al-Din Khalji was so impressed by the Shaikh that he had sent Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan to the Shaikh to become his disciples, which with much reluctance, the Shaikh accepted. The Shaikh had told:<sup>36</sup>

شما پادشاه زاده و صاحب چترکار پادشاهی و سلطنت و لشکر کشی و  
اقلیم گیری لایق حال شما نیست و این خانه فقر و مسکنت و خاک براهی و  
بیچارگی است - شما تحمل آن کی توانید.

“ You are Princes, who have royal umbrella (claim over throne) and are to lead the army, conquer territory and rule over the Sultanate and hence it would be difficult to lead with me a life of poverty, hardship, piety and self-control. How can you bear (the strain).”

Repeated requests and promise to become *faqirs* by the Princes, moved the Shaikh and he told them:<sup>37</sup> باپدر خویش مشورت کنید تا چه فرماید -

“Talk to your father for permission and see what his views are.”

On consultations, the Sultan told:

من اول روز گفته ام که خدمت شیخ از راه کرم ایشان را به خدمتگاری قبول کنند.

“From the beginning I was in favour of placing them in the service of the Shaikh.”

He sent an *amir* who conveyed the Sultan’s consent and then they were taken as *murids* of the Shaikh.<sup>38</sup> With the Shaikh’s permission they had arranged a feast at the *khanqah* to commemorate their discipleship.

*Qiwam al-Aqaid* refers to the lunch party as under:<sup>39</sup>

“When the Princes became his disciples they took his permission for offering a lunch party at Ghiyaspur. They made provisions of infrastructure and food items by working out for seven days. Both the brothers informed the Shaikh that provisions had been made and sought his permission for the lunch party for *durveshes* and visitors. With his permission, they went to the Sultan and informed him. The Sultan instructed the famous head cook to take care and also instructed the *amirs* to go to Ghiyaspur and help serving the *durveshes* and *faqirs*. He asked his sons to personally take the bowls and have the *durveshes* wash their hands. He also asked them to personally serve *sherbet* (cold drink), *mewa* (fruits) and *pan*

(betels), as far as possible and distribute gold and silver coins to each of them. He, then, told the *amirs* that he himself would have liked to do that, but he would not be permitted.

In the morning, the Princes organised the serving of the food at three different sheds. Then, they came to the Shaikh and informed him that arrangements had been made. The Shaikh then proceeded to the place. All four-five Princes, *amirs*, *khans* and *maliks* helped in the process of serving. They took the water bowl and came to the Shaikh, who instructed to them to wash the hands of *durveshes* and *murids*. *Amirs* and *khans* had gathered in groups and ensured washing of hands and served *betels*, sherbet and fruits personally. There, special *dastarkhwans* had been spread out.

After the lunch was over, the Princes asked for permission for organising *sama*. As the people sat on the ground to listen to the *qawwals*, the *sama* began. People who had gathered were amazed to see the Princes, *amirs* and *maliks* at the service of the *faqirs*. At the time of *salat (namaz)*, the Shaikh got up and left for home.”

The role of the Prince in rapprochement between the Sultan and the Sufis could not be ruled out, as Khizr Khan was the heir apparent and the dearest son of the Sultan.

Another Prince, Ulugh Khan, future Muhammad bin Tughlaq had great

faith in the Shaikh and often visited him. Once, when Ulugh Khan visited, Iqbal reported that Uhigh Khan had come. The Shaikh corrected him to say that the Sultan had come. When, Iqbal repeated his words again and again, the Shaikh corrected him, ‘Lalla didn’t I tell you to say Sultan’. Ulugh Khan heard this and construed it as a blessing and prophecy for him to become a Sultan.<sup>40</sup>

Again, when Sultan Ghiyas al-Din Tughlaq was away to Lakhnauti, Prince Ulugh had come to enquire about the Shaikh’s health, as the latter was very unwell. The Shaikh asked him to sit on the cot, saying :

هم بالای این کھت بنشین “you sit down on the cot.” Ulugh Khan said:

“How can I sit in your revered presence.” The Shaikh said:

ماتورا کھت می نشانیم بنشین- “I am asking you, so you sit down”. The Prince out of much reverence sat, resting only a part of his body on the cot. Later, the Shaikh asked Iqbal to bring a chair and asked Khwaja Jahan to sit. Ulugh Khan told Khwaja Jahan:<sup>41</sup>

“The Shaikh has given me the throne and you, the chair of *wizarat*.”

The same became true later on.

Similarly, Nizam Khan used to visit his father’s *Pir*. Even on his father’s death, Prince Nizam Khan (Sikandar Lodi) went to Shaikh Sama al-Din with a work on prosody with him. The Shaikh then read out a chapter and explained the meaning of it. Before leaving, Nizam Khan told the Shaikh that he was



going to be enthroned, as nobles had invited him for the purpose. For this he sought his blessings. Then he kissed the ground and left.

At this stage, he had also asked the Shaikh to explain the meaning of the chapter, as he had uttered, 'May God render you fortunate in both the worlds'. This anecdote shows that the Sultan considered the blessings of the Shaikh as extremely important, which was high on his agenda, despite the nobles' full support towards him.

The visit of Khizr Khan, Ulugh Khan and Nizam Khan to the Shaikhs is an important aspect of Sufi-Sultanate relations, during the period. For, all three of them were heirs apparent i.e. *Wali Ahad*. The Shaikhs' support and blessings were vital to their enthronement. The latter two visited the Shaikhs' primarily for this purpose and the respective Shaikhs had prophesized their enthronement. Khizr Khan, on the other hand, had the desire to become a '*murid*' and even a '*faqir*'. The Shaikh never prophesised kingship in his favour, as probably he knew his ultimate fate. The heirs apparent during these days had important position in the Sultanate, as they were given the tasks of Governorship of Provinces and to lead important military campaigns. The Sufis' influence on them helped building up their character to some extent and draw 'appropriate future course of action'. In the same vein, Firoz Shah Tughlaq had promised the Sufis that he would behave justly, if became a king and thus, he abided by his commitment.

The amount of respect the relatives of Sultans and *amirs* also showed to the Sufis is reflected in various accounts. Once, Malik Husan al-Din Qalagh, a nephew of the Sultan invited Shaikh Nizam al-Din to his house. To commemorate the Shaikh's visit, he gave away half of his property and belonging in charity. Precious carpets laid to receive the Shaikh were given away to the bearer of the *palanquin* on which the Shaikh came.<sup>42</sup>

Maulana Sharaf al-Din Jamakal was the Imam of a nephew of Ala al-Din Khalji, who became a staunch disciple of the Shaikh.

Further, when a visitor wanted help from the Shaikh in regard to marriage of his two daughters, the Shaikh gave him a chit for Malik Qirbak, a noble of the Sultan. Qirbak, who had made arrangements for the marriage of his own daughter, gave away the material and money to the visitor.<sup>43</sup> On knowing this, the Sultan appreciated the gesture and gave him ten times the wealth he had given to the visitor.<sup>44</sup>

Another trusted noble of Sultan Ala al-Din was Malik Qiran, the *amir-i-shikar*, who had joined his discipleship. He paid back debts of some disciples of the Shaikh in dire situation. Once, Khwaja Taj al-Din had to pay 500 *tankas* to a creditor. On hearing this, Qiran sent the amount to Taj al-Din to pay back. All through his life he spent his money in charity.<sup>45</sup>

A total and unquestionable devotion of the Princes and nobles who were *murids* or followers of the Shaikh could be seen from numerous

anecdotes. Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan were executed in 1318 by the order of Mubarak Shah. Before execution, the executor asked them as what was use of their faith in the Shaikh. The Princes replied as under:<sup>46</sup>

ای مدعی خامکار از آن جهت قصوری و نقصانی نیست بلکه برکت آن که به  
خدمت شیخ پیوستم ما را از نصرت دنیاوی باز داشتند و از کردن خون های و  
گرفتن اموال باطل و ارهانیند

“...due to the blessings emanating from the discipleship of the Shaikh, we have been saved from the evil effect of involvement in this sordid world and from shedding innocent blood and illegally occupying the property of others. (The Shaikh) thus relieved us from the Quranic admonition”. (The details are available in the next chapter)

This was a glaring example of the exercise of the spiritual power of the Sufi over others, in not only getting them to not to do what they want to do and getting them to do what they do not want to do, but also to influence, shape and determine the very wants of others. So, powerful was the faith of the Princes in the Shaikh and in his teachings that the Princes believed that the blinding or execution was in their own interests, as it saved them from sin.

In addition, there were many visitors to Delhi who desired to meet the Sultan as well as the Sufis and thus, became a factor for their linkage. For instance, Once, Nasiri, a poet came to Delhi from Transoxiana to the *khanqah*

of Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki. "I have written a *qasidah* in the praise of Sultan Shams al- Din Iltutmish", he told the Shaikh, "Please, pray for generous reward for me from the Sultan". "*Insha Allah* (God willing)" replied the Shaikh, "You will be rewarded bountifully." Nasiri obtained an audience at the court and the Sultan gave him one thousand *tankas* for each of the couplet of his *qasidah*, which comprised thirty-five couplets.<sup>47</sup> Nasiri brought that amount to the Shaikh and offered half of that for distribution among the poor. The Shaikh did not accept the amount. It is also said that when Shaikh Bakhtiyar Kaki died, Sultan Iltutmish led his funeral prayer. The Sultan also died the same year.<sup>48</sup>

The Chisthti principles prevented the Shaikhs from interactions with the Sultans. Yet, since the saints occupied a privileged position, it drew the nobility and government functionaries to their *khanqahs*. Thus, Amir Khusrau, the panegyrist to seven Sultans of Delhi, was a favorite disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din and enjoyed an intimate relationship with the Shaikh. Similarly, there were many '*murids*' of the Shaikh who were in government service.

The Sufis, from their side did not encourage the government servants to leave government service and join him as senior disciples. They followed a pragmatic policy of allowing the '*murids*' and disciples to continue their services and kept the rigid qualification of non-involvement in '*kasb*' and '*sughal*' for the '*Khalifas*' only, who were entitled to enroll '*murids*' and

considered their ‘successors’. Not only they did not encourage defection from the government service, but also took measures to dissuade them from leaving government service, which could indicate their support for the Sultanate.

Malik Mubarak Shams al-Mulk, a senior disciple, was destined to become one of the master’s successors. But, he continued in secular office at the express command of the master. Rukn al-Din Kashani, on at least two occasions, expressed the desire to give up his position for the *durvesh* life, but Shaikh Burhan al-Din Gharib consistently advised him to stick to his duty. The same thing occurred in the case of Qutlugh Khan and several others. Shaikh Zayn al-Din reflected on this paradox in an extended series of remarks:<sup>49</sup>

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“If someone enters the path of poverty, he should not give up his work and acquisition. Service, work and the like, do not prevent obedience and trust in God. Whatever they do, they pursue their work. The revered *Shaikh al-Islam*, Burhan al-Din had some income (*nan-i amanat*) before his initiation and after initiation; however much he beseeched with Shaikh Nizam al-Din that he would give it up, permission was not granted, until God, most high, showed his grace and brought him out (of worldly society).”

Amir Khusrau was a courtier, and was distinguished among the poets.

Time and again, he said to the master (Nizam al-Din), “No one has peace or satisfaction, who even for a day has spoken eulogies of any one.” He came to the Shaikh, and cast his turban on the ground, crying out, “How long will I praise these tyrants?” The Shaikh said, “Be patient, until God does something”. Similarly, Maulana Alim Dabir Qutlugh Khan, time and again, cried out to the Shaikh, “I will give up the service of the people”. The Shaikh said:

“No, my friend; go to the court and perform your duty; also pursue your obedience and worship, until God brings something before you.”

In another case, there was a soldier who became attached to the Shaikh. After some time, he said:

“The decorations of my horse are my impediments. I will give up the service and get rid of my horse.”

The Shaikh said:<sup>50</sup>

“My friend, God, most high, gave Salih, the Prophet a camel, and to the Prophet Jesus, He gave a donkey; He has given you a horse. Do not get rid of it. Endure your sadness and pursue your work until God does something. A time will come when the Divine nature will release you from all impediments. Alone you cannot extricate yourself from attachments and impediments, unless God gives release. Until that time, you should be involved with what you have and obey, worship, give thanks and be patient.”

Though, in most cases the tendency was to back away from the engagement with the Sultans, in some individual instances, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya permitted disciples to join military expeditions as spiritual advisors or to remain in government service (as we have seen above). He sent some disciples to the south, from Delhi to Malwa and to the Deccan before the migration to Daulatabad, not as part of a missionary scheme but to meet the needs of particular people. One such disciple was Shaikh Musa Deogiri, who came to visit and ask for his advice. Another was Burhan al-Din Garib's brother, Muntajib al-Din. Mir Khwurd speaks respectfully of two brothers - Aziz al-Din and Kamal al-Din. They expressed the wish to travel somewhere. When they were leaving, he gave each of them a *jalali* coins and told Kamal al-Din, "You be in Malwa," Aziz al-Din, "You be in the *wilayat* (domain) of Deogir". Though Aziz al-Din was dissatisfied with receiving a single coin, Kamal al-Din interpreted it as a sign of their future greatness (*jalal*, "majesty"). Mir Khwurd remarks that in the "lands of Deogir and Telang were, all the followers and servants" of Aziz al-Din.<sup>51</sup> Although, these two brothers might have successfully extended the influence of the Chishti order by their activities, their migration occurred partly due to their own initiative and could not be considered as evidence of a Chishti missionary movement.

Shaikh Nizam al-Din also sent one eminent disciple out of Delhi at the request of an army general, who was leaving on a mission of conquest. Mir

Khwurd relates that Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji ordered one of his generals to take a large army, to conquer the city of Chanderi in Malwa (Chanderi, a trading centre, south of Gwalior was on the main route from Delhi to Deogir). The general (probably Ayn al-Mulk Mahru), who led the successful expedition against Chanderi, Dhar, Ujjain, and Mandu in 1305, was an adherent of Nizam al-Din Auliya. He approached the Shaikh and asked him to send one of his disciples along, so that they could go with the Shaikh's protection. Shaikh Nizam al-Din agreed and appointed Wajih al-Din Yusuf of Kilokhari, sending him along with the army. In the event, the general's attack was successful and the Shaikh took up his abode there and came to be known as Yusuf Chanderi. In this instance, it was again at the request of a State functionary that Nizam al-Din Auliya sent this disciple on his mission.<sup>52</sup>

A similar case was that of Shams al-Din Dhari who worked in the imperial treasury (divan) before becoming a disciple of Nizam al-Din. Though, he expressed the desire to retire as hermit, Shaikh Nizam al-Din pointed out that it was no less important to come out of seclusion to benefit others and gave him an inkpot to signify that he should return to the worldly duties. Shams al-Din received a land assignment (*iqta*) in the Deccan from the government and was buried there. Here too, Shaikh Nizam al-Din allowed a disciple to go to the Deccan in connection with the Khalji's imperial expansion.

The situation after Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya had changed. The Sufis



could not maintain similar distance from the Sultanate any more. After Shaikh Nizam al-Din, his successor Shaikh Nasir al - Din Chiragh Delhi had accompanied Sultan Mohammad Tughlaq on his expedition, though reluctantly. He also administered the oath of office to the next Sultan, Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Similarly, Shaikh Khalilullah, the son of Shah Nur al-Din, the founder of *Ni'Malullahi Shi'i* order, attended the coronation of Ala al-Din Abdul Muzaffar Ahmed Shah II in 1436 AD, in Bidar.

The Sufis in the Deccan need special mention, as there was still closer cooperation between the Sufis and the Sultans there. Persian writings of 19th century provide us a glimpse of the advent of Sufism in the Decan. These are generally linked with Khaljis' invasion of the Decan and shifting of the capital to Daulatabad by Mohammad bin Tughlaq. Some biographical works in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are available in this regard. Later in 19th Century, some Urdu hagiographers and British gazetteers made collection of oral anecdotes, as well.

Initially, the Delhi Sultanate invaded the Decan to loot and plunder, so that they could meet the economic requirement of sustaining a strong army on the North West for possible invasion of Mongols. The first successful invasion of the Deccan was that of Ala al-Din Khalji. Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq wanted his second capital at Deogir or Daulatabad. He had a mission of world conquest. He probably perceived that the Sufis could be instrumental

in conversion of large number of Hindus as Musalmans in the South. Therefore, he directed some important Sufis to Shift to Daulatabad. Increase of Muslim population would strengthen his authority to a great extent. However, the most popular *silsilah* of Sufi order of that time was Chishti *silsilah*, which prophesised distance from the Sultanate. It was against the acceptance of employment in government service, as it involved receiving of salary from such taxes which had no prevision in *shari'at* as well.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, acceptance of the Sultan's travel directive was incompatible with the territorial organization of *wilayat*-dominions, the areas over which the Sufi masters exercised their authority.<sup>54</sup>

Thus, adherence to the command of the Sultan would mean giving precedence to the order of the Sultan over the order of respective *Pirs* and the norms of the *silsilah*. Notwithstanding this dichotomy, many Sufi saints had to migrate from Delhi to Daulatabad, as the Sultan in their eyes was a tyrant and disobedience would cause grave consequences for them. This, on one hand, indicates attempt of distaning and on the other, cooperation with the directive of the Sultanate.

Khandesh falls between Gujarat and the Deccan. The Faruqi Kings in Khandesh received continuous support from the Sufis of Khuldabad. Firishta has enumerated the long association of the Sufis of Khuldabad and the Faruqi Kings.<sup>55</sup> The latter named their capital as Burhanpur, after the name of the

famous Shaikh, Burhan al-Din Gharib and a town on Tapti river as Zayanabad after the name of Shaikh Zain al-Din Shirazi.<sup>56</sup> Malik Raja, the first ruler of Faruqi dynasty, was believed to be a disciple of Shaikh Zain al-Din. Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya is said to have prophesised kingship for the founder of Bahmani dynasty.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, Siraj al-Din Junaydi prophesised kingship of Ala al-Din Ahmed Bahman Shah. Gisu Daraz, similarly, had predicted the coronation of Ahmad Bahman Shah. It is also said that the Sultans sometimes received guidance from the Sufi Saints, in their dreams.

The advent of Sufism could be viewed from the angle of disciples of Shaikh Nizam al-Din also. Prior to the migration to Daulatabad he had sent some disciples to the south for meeting the requirement of the people there. The important ones among them were Shaikh Musa Deogiri and Aziz al-Din who settled at Deogir and Kamal al-Din at Dhar in Malwa respectively. He also sent Wajih al-Din Yusuf of Kilokhari to Chanderi. Shams al-Din Dhari, was a disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, who was sent to the Deccan by the Sultan with the Shaikh's permission.<sup>58</sup> Mir Khwurd's youngest uncle Shams al-Din Sayyid Khamush and a friend of Burahan al-Din Gharib also migrated, settled and died at Deogir.<sup>59</sup> Qazi Sharaf al-Din Firuzkuhi, who was a companion of Mir Khwurd also migrated and died in Deogir. Shaikh Fakhr al-Din Firuzkuhi, another Saint under compulsion migrated to Deogir. Shihab al-Din haq-gu "truth teller", who migrated to Daulatabad, under

compulsion returned to Delhi, where he was executed for criticizing the Sultan in his presence. Others, who also went to Daulatabad were Khwaja Taj al-Din Dawar and Maulana Shihab al-Din Imam, but the latter returned from there.

The most important Chishti Shaikh who settled in the Deccan was Burhan al-Din Gharib, a disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, who settled and died at Daulatabad. Shaikh Nizam al-Din compared him with Bayazid, a great saint. He had four important disciples. Farid al-Din Adib was a strong devout and when he was told that he would become a *Khalifa*, he wept bitterly and prayed Allah to take him away before his master. Thus, he died thirteen days before the death of his *Pir*, on 29 Muharram, 738/17 Aug 1337. Nasir al-Din, Malik Mubarak and Zain al-Din Shirazi were his important disciples. However, it was Zain al-Din Shirazi who was considered his successor.

Initially, they maintained the Chishti tradition of keeping away from the Sultanate and avoiding receiving grants and *futuh* from them. However, the Deccan Socio-political condition was such that this distance between the Sufi and the Sultanate could not last long. Bahmani Sultans and Faruqi Sultans of Khandeh were devoted to these Sufi Saints and sought their support and blessings, more often. The Sufis got assured because of these Muslim kingdoms' presence in the South. Thus, this brought them closer.

Shaikh Nizam al-Din had ordered Burhan al-Din “*la radd wa kadd wa la madd*” i.e. ‘no refusing, no asking, no saving’, which the disciples of Burhan al-Din appeared to have conveniently forgotten. Firishta reports that Sultan Mujahid Shah visited the shrine of Burhan al-Din and became a disciple of Zain al-Din Shirazi. However, this information is subject to verification, as the Shaikh had in fact died five years before Mujahid Shah’s coronation. However, it is possible that when he was a Prince he might have visited him. However, the shrine’s embassy to Sultan took on the appearance on a ritual occasion and presented ‘*tabarrukat*’ as well as the *pagdri* (turban) from the shrine to the Sultan.

Saiyyid Gisu Daraz, who was the successor of Nasir al - Din Chiragh Dehli, left Delhi during Timur’s invasion and went to the Deccan. Sultan Firoz Shah Bahmani received him with great honour and brought him to Gulbarga.<sup>60</sup> Saiyyid Gisu Daraz settled there, which again reiterates the theory that Sufi saints during the period preferred settling at places of political nerve centers. There was indeed a considerable amount of support of the Sufis and the Sultans towards each other during the period of their expansion and consolidation. When the Sultanate was in a formative stage, the Sufis provided them with much needed moral and spiritual support. Similarly, wherever the Sultanate expanded, it provided the fertile ground for settlement of the Sufis and their services.

Firishta has also noted that it was customary for both religious scholars and the Sufis to be present to assist the coronation of Bahmani Kings. The Bahmani Kings visited the shrines. They also conferred pension on Latif al-Din, a nephew of Shaikh Burhan al-Din Gharib, in addition to the daily stipend given to Khuldabad Shrines.

Notwithstanding that the Sufis, specially the Chishtis were keen to maintain distance and independence from the Sultans, they could not completely cut themselves off from the Sultanate, partly due to it being a 'Muslim Sultanate' or atleast appeared to be so, partly due to the strategic importance of the location of their *khanqahs* and partly due to their interaction with intermediaries like Princes, courtiers etc. Their interest in the administration is also reflected by the Sufi saying 'Entrust the country to a God fearing wazir'.<sup>61</sup>

Their suggestion to the Sultanate and concern for the welfare of the people is also reflected by Shaikh Nizam al-Din's suggestion on booty from Ala al-Din's southern campaign, when he said: "The booty should be used for the welfare of general public"<sup>62</sup>

It is noted that earlier the Sufis kept themselves away from the Sultanate as far as possible, but as the days passed by, they inched towards the Sultanate closer and closer, which is clearly reflected in case of the Sufis, specially the Chishti Sufis in the Deccan. As the Sultanate period started coming to an

end, the Sufis had come much closer to the Sultanate. During Mughal period, the Sufis enjoyed special privileges and greater interaction with the emperors.

The space of distance from the Sultanate and cooperation or support existed simultaneously as well as inter-changeably. Thus, the notion that the Sufis, especially the Chishtis maintained a distance or the notion that they were merely ‘collaborators’ or ‘agents’ of the state system would be a one sided approach to the problem. The analysis of the space of incompatibility between the Sufis and the Sultan in the next chapter will further clarify that relationship of the Sufis and the Sultans had the space for distance, cooperation and incompatibility, each aspect existing independently as well as, as a part of the whole gambit of this ‘triangular model’ of relationship.

## NOTES

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30. *Siyar al-Auliya*, 253-255.
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32. Shams Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi*, ed. Vilayat Husain, Calcutta 1889-91 A.D., p. 87.
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59. M.Ali Samani, *Siyar-i Muhammadi*, ed. and tr. SSN Ahmed Qadri, 1969, p.33.
60. *Fuwa'id al-Fu'ad*, p.221 and *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.77.
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## SUFIS AND THE SULTANATE : RELATIONSHIP OF INCOMPATIBILITY

Sufi practices which did not seem to derive their sanctity from the *Shari'at* such as, establishment and functioning of the *khanqah*, organising *sama*, concepts of '*wallayah*', '*wilayat*', '*Pir-murid* relationship' and '*futuh*' etc. appear to have become the bone of contention between the Sufis and the Sultanate, on a number of occasions. Further, if one went entirely by the Sufi, especially Chishti self-image or the image projected in hagiographic literature, the Sultan and the *dervesh* stood at opposite ends of the spectrum. Some modern writers also have accepted this image and emphasized this long distance, indeed a dichotomous relationship between them. Such,<sup>6</sup> for instance, is the focus of the scholarly work of Prof. K.A. Nizami.<sup>1</sup> Such attempted distance from the Sultanate also became a contributing factor for incompatibility in their relationship. The projection of keeping away from the Sultanate was with a view to projecting an image of independence, notwithstanding their sympathies and implicit support for the Sultanate. Despite this projection at a number of occasions, the Sufis and the Sultan came in contact – face to face or through intermediaries, wittingly or unwitting, which some times caused incompatibility in their relationship.

The Sultans on their part made constant efforts to highlight the dependence and subservience of the Shaikhs on them. They tried to employ

them in state service. The Sufis, specially the Chishtis, firmly refused this, for they could ill-afford to be seen under the patronage of the de-facto ruler of the region. The Shaikhs possessed spiritual power, whereas, the Sultans had political authority backed by coercive force. Chishti Shaikhs refrained from performing any such gesture, which was designed to highlight the supremacy of the political authority over the spiritual authority. This was mainly why they rejected government service and avoided meeting the Sultans and accepting gifts from them.

The concepts of '*wilayat*' and '*wallayah*' and the establishment of '*khanqah*' and its functioning as a parallel institution to the state system were concern for the Sultan. The heads of *silsilahs* appointed their *Khalifas* and the *Khalifas* appointed their deputies and a hierarchy of saints came to be established, with the chief saint at the apex of the system. This was identical to the system of the state, where the Sultan was at the apex with governors as head of provinces and so on. The head of the *silsilah* was often referred to with high-sounding titles such as *Sultan al-Arifin*, *Sultan al-Mashaikh*, *Shah-i Din*, *Sultan al-Hind*, and *Qutab-i Alam*, possibly to the utter 'jealousy' and 'concern' of the Sultan. Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya was called *Mahboob-i Ilahi*, as well. Such titles were more common among the Chishtis, which were apparently, used to indicate their position and sphere of spiritual activity.

The use of political terminology by a Shaikh seemed to parallel the

position of political power, creating a situation of great ambivalence, in which, the parallel could either remain stationary, compliment with the other, merge with it or challenge it. The Sultan's response to this situation was also multifaceted: 'it was imbued with respect, envy, suspicion and fear.' When, suspicion overpowered the desire to draw legitimacy from the Shaikh, incompatibilities arose. Thus, Ala al-Din Khalji was jealous and suspicious of the ongoings in the *khanqah* and popularity of the Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, and had sent spies to find out the details. The fear and respect also was vividly reflected, when he sent a letter to the Shaikh seeking his blessings and guidance. He was relieved when he learned that the Shaikh was not concerned about the governance and was busy in prayer. Similarly, Muhammad Tughlaq was a regular visitor to Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, when he was a Prince. Out of respect and possibly also out of fear, he was reluctant to sit on the cot, when asked by the Shaikh. His visit, apparently, was for seeking the support and blessings of the Shaikh for becoming a Sultan. But, once he became a Sultan, his attitude towards the Sufis changed. He did not require the support from the Shaikhs any more and hence, attempted to subjugate the '*murids*' or *Khalifas* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya out of suspicion and envy, due to their popularity and acceptability among the masses.

Use of high sounding titles were in conformity and furtherance of the concept of '*wilayat*'. The concept of *wilayat* could be explained through

various anecdotes. When Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya visited Ajodhan for the last time to meet Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shagr in *Jamadi I*, 664 AH/ 1265 AD, Shaikh Farid al – Din said:<sup>2</sup>

“I have given you both the worlds; go and take the kingdom of Hindustan.”

The strength with which the concept of spiritual jurisdiction or *wilayat* was adhered to also is obvious from other anecdotes. For instance, once Abd’allah Rumi, a musician stayed with Shaikh Farid al Din Ganj-i Shagr at Ajodhan, and when he left for the southwest journey to Multan, he requested Baba Farid to pray for his safety. The Shaikh replied:<sup>3</sup>

از ین جاتا بدان موضع که چندین گروه باشد  
آنجا حوضی ست، تا آنجا حد من است  
سلامت خواهی رسید ، از آنجا تا ملتان  
در عهده شیخ بهاء الدین است

“My territory is from this place (Ajodhan) to that *mauza*, which is at a distance of so many *karohs*, up to the point of a water reservoir. You will reach that point safely. The area from that point to Multan is under the charge of Shaikh Baha al-Din.”

Further, when Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki reached Multan from Baghdad, Qubacha requested him to settle there permanently. Suspecting an intrusion into his spiritual territory, Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakariya went to visit Shaikh Qutub al-Din and conveyed to the Shaikh his desire to

leave his territory by placing his shoes in the direction of Delhi. The Chishti Shaikh got the hint and immediately left for Delhi.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, nearly a hundred years later, Sultan Mubarak Khalji requested Shaikh Rukn al-Din Multani, a grandson of Shaikh Baha al-Din, to set up a *khanqah* in Delhi in order to divert the attention of the people from Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, whose spiritual power the Sultan resented. Shaikh Rukn al-Din, however, refused to interfere in the spiritual jurisdiction of his Chishti contemporary. Such non-interference in each other's spiritual dominion was not necessarily on *quid-proquo* or reciprocal basis. This was primarily because of reverence towards each other.

This demonstrated the presence of spiritual sovereignty, which paralleled or went beyond the political sovereignty in spatial terms. In the socio-religious ethos of South Asia, supernatural power is deemed to be on a higher pedestal than temporal power. The protection provided by spiritual power had a definite edge over the latter. Thus, in the times of distress, the Sultans looked for help from the Sufis. Moreover, Sultans like Khalji rulers conveyed their desire to meet the Shaikh, which was turned down. The higher pedestal of the Sufis is also vindicated by the fact that their *murids* risked their life by showing allegiance to the Sufis in preference to the Sultans.

The popularisation of the concept of '*wallayah*' further enhanced the relative position of the Sufis vis-à-vis the Sultans. The term '*wallayah*' is



derived from the word '*Wali*' (pl. *Auliya*), which means 'friend of God'. The Sufi was called '*Wali*', '*Wali-Allah*', Shaikh or *Pir*. The concept of *wallayah* means sainthood. Shaikh Nizam al-Din was known as Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. He was addressed in a plural form (*Auliya*) because of his high status among the Sufis. The main difference between them and the Prophets (*Nabis*) is that the *Nabis* were born before the birth of Prophet Mohammad, whereas Sufis were people with Prophetic qualities, who were born after Prophet Mohammad. The concept of *wallayah* became very popular during the medieval period and placed the Sufis far above the temporal power in popular perceptions.

The Sufis believed in '*tawakkul*' i.e. trust in God. For them God was the Provider. With this in view, they generally did not involve in '*kasb*' i.e. working for living. They rejected '*shughl*' i.e. government service and lived on '*futuh*'. Moreover, they often rejected *futuh* i.e. unasked for gift from the Sultanate as well. This was partly to avoid dependence on the Sultanate and partly because of their isolationist attitude, based on - pragmatic, legal and historical considerations. It was believed that government services (*shughl*) created serious obstacles in the development of one's spiritual personality and in the attainment of gnosis (*ma'rifat*). Government service was not contributory to the service of religion, but that of dynastic class interest. The income of the Sultans was also perceived as the income from prohibited

sources, sans the sanction of the *Shari'at*. Political organizations including the '*darbar*' and the court had precious little to do with Islamic ideals and way of life. Apparently, therefore Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya instructed his disciples, "You will not go to the doors of kings and seek their rewards."<sup>5</sup>

The Sufis lived on *futuh* i.e unasked for gift, which was voluntary and apparently would not have been a cause of dispute. But like *Shughl*, *Futuh* also was a factor for incompatible relation between the Sufi and the Sultan. Not only did the Sufi Shaikhs rejected *shughl* unless compelled by a despotic Sultan, they also often refused gifts or *futuh* from the Sultanate.

Thus, Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki not only refused to enter the service of the state, but also refused to accept the monetary gift offered by Sultan Qutub al-Din Aibek, which he sent through a messenger, Malik Ikhtiyar-Uddin. He, instead, lifted a corner of the rug on which he was sitting. The Malik saw a '*dariya*' (river) and a 'jungle' full of gold under it.<sup>6</sup> The Shaikh, thereupon, asked him:

"You take away the gift you have brought (from Sultan)."

Incidents of this kind are numerous, which portray that whatever the rulers possessed, the Shaikhs possessed in greater abundance. The Shaikhs were one up on the rulers. The Chishti Shaikhs often refused to accept gifts from the nobles too, as it would indirectly mean their dependence on the Sultan.

Iltutmish, a saintly Sultan, once asked Shaikh Hasan to accept the post of the *Qazi*, but in vain. When the Sultan insisted, the Shaikh pretended to have become insane in order to avoid the Sultan's anger. When Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki learnt this, he remarked, "Shaikh Hasan is not insane, he is *dana* (wise)."<sup>7</sup> The Saint thus, thereafter, came to be known as Shaikh Hasan Dana.

Baba Farid had developed an attitude of indifference towards the government, and advised his disciples:<sup>8</sup> "If you desire elevations in your spiritual ranks, do not mix with the princes of blood."

During his time, due to political upheavals many theologians had chosen political life. Baba Farid did not deviate from his earmarked path. He advised Sayidi Maula, who came to Ajodhan on his way to Delhi for settlement:<sup>9</sup>

اما يك نصيحت من نگه داری. باملوك و امراء اختلاط نكنی. و آمدو  
شد ایشان در خانه خود از مهلكات تصور کنی که هر درویشی  
که در اختلاط را ملوك و امراء بگشاید عاقبت او وخیم گردد.

"But, keep in mind my advice. Do not associate with kings and nobles; regard their visits to your house as calamities. Every *durvesh*, who opens the door of association with kings and nobles is doomed."

But, he disregarded Baba Farid's advice and had to pay a heavy penalty for it, by losing his life.

There is a detailed description of Sayyidi Maula's imprisonment and death in *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* of Barani, which is as follows:<sup>10</sup>

سیدی موله را بسته پیش کوشک سلطان آوردند سلطان با زبان خود با او مباحثه کرد و در آن جمع شیخ ابوبکر طوسی با جمع حیدریان دیگر حاضر بودند سلطان روی طرف ایشان کرد گفت که ای درویشان انصاف من ازین مولا بستانید بحری نام حیدری بیباک شده بر سیدی درآمده و چند استره بزد و بزوال نوز اورا مجروح کرد و ارکلیخان از بالای کوشک طرف پیلبان اشارت کرد و پیل برسیدی براند و سیدی را بکشتند و آنچنان پادشاهی حلیمی طاقت استماع جنگجاک نیاورد حکیمی بکرد و حرمت صورت درویشی و هیت درویشان محافظت ننمود.

“Saiyyidi Maula was tied up and brought before the court of the Sultan (Jalal al-Din Khalji). The Sultan engaged himself in a discussion with Saiyyidi Maula. On the occasion, Shaikh Abu Bakr Tusi Haidari was also present. The Sultan asked him as to ‘what was to be done’ to Saiyyidi Maula. In the meantime Bahri, a sepoy, injured the Maula with his knife. Further, Ar Quli Khan from the top (first floor of *mahal*) instructed by (waving) his hand, upon which a man with his elephant came to the front and crushed Saiyyidi Maula under its feet. Thus, the Sultan could not save a *durvesh*.”

However, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, which is a later primary source, gives a different version and attributes the responsibility for the killing to *the Qalandars* of Shaikh Abu Bakr Tusi. It describes the picture as follows:<sup>11</sup>

سیدی موله در زمان سلطان غیاث الدین بلبن در دهلی بود. مریدان اورا اتباع بسیار داشت. و بمردم طعام می داد و خوارق می نمود. بعضی مردم را بروی گمان کیمیا

“Sayyidi Maula was alive during Sultan Giyas al-Din Balban. He had

large number of *murids* and followers . He used to serve large number of people. In addition, he distributed medicines and treated patients. Some people considered him ‘*jadugar*’, while others attributed it to his spiritual power as he successfully treated patients. He was killed or executed during the time of Jalal-uddin Khalji by *Qalandars* of Shaikh Abu Bakr Tusi.”

Barani’s reference on this that the Sultan could not save a *durvesh* is important. It leaves us to wonder, whether without the implicit approval of the Sultan such a thing could have taken place in his presence, while he had not pronounced any judgment. The same is also testified by the fact that there is no reference to the Sultan’s doling out any punishment either to Ar Quli Khan or to the killer.

Barani describes the after effect of this, narrating that ‘there was heavy storm and rainfall never seen before, which was considered as a bad omen. It was followed by draught and starvation. On seeing the heavy storm (after Maula’s death) people thought it to be the ‘*Qayamat*’ i.e. end of the world. The Sultan, who did not have faith in Sufi saints, thereafter, became a believer.’<sup>12</sup>

Forcing for ‘*shughl*’ was confined to two to three Sultans, during the entire of period of the Sultanate and could not be viewed as a regular feature. Such aberration also included killing of the Sufis at the hands or with the

tacit or implicit support of the Sultanate, including the above one. As regards refusal of *sughal*, Maulana Kamal al-d in Zahid's case was a classical one for his reply. He was a teacher of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. When asked by Balban to accept the office of the royal *Imam*, the Maulana rejected the proposal and said:<sup>13</sup>“Our prayer is all that is left to us. Does the Sultan wish to take that away too.”

Though the Chishti Sufis generally refused *futuh*, instances of acceptance of *futuh* were also there. But, such instances also portray an incompatible relationship. For instance, once Balban sent to Baba Farid a tray of *tankas*, which the Shaikh accepted and got it distributed amongst the poor. Out of that, one coin by mistake could not be distributed. Maulana Badr al-Din kept it in his cap to give away to some one in the morning. Baba Farid that day while leading the *Isha namaz* (night prayer) started the prayer and then discontinued it. He asked the Maulana if all the coins had been distributed, and on learning that there was one coin left, he picked it up and threw it away. He also lamented as to why he had touched the coin.<sup>14</sup>

Incidentally, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya had also referred about a saint, Khwaja Karim, who never touched any coin after taking up '*faqr*'.<sup>15</sup>

The incident of Baba Farid was an example of disquietude arising out of a relationship. His distaste and apathy towards the Sultanate is apparent from this. It is believed that Balban had great faith in the Shaikh, but in no

way it could influence the Shaikh's position on the Sultanate.

Further, Shaikh Nizam al-Din had accepted some money as *futuh* from Khusrau Khan, who had killed Sultan Mubarak Khalji. Subsequently, when Khusrau Khan was defeated by Ghiyas al-Din Tughlaq, who succeeded the throne, he sought to recover the donation that was claimed to have depleted the royal treasury. Shaikh Nizam al-Din argued that he had received the sum from the public treasury of Muslim believers and distributed it among the deserving, keeping nothing for himself. Though the Sultan kept quiet, his heart turned against the Shaikh. Thus, while non-acceptance of '*futuh*' from the Sultanate reflected elements of incompatibility in the relationship, acceptance of '*futuh*', as a paradox had also contributed to the furtherance of incompatibility in the relationship.

The Sufis were perceived as 'spiritual people' who could redress temporal grievances as well, besides providing spiritual guidance and healing effect to the distress or other seekers. The Sufis sometimes subconsciously assumed the responsibility of advising the Sultans or making recommendations to them that they thought were just and imperative. On the other hand, the Sultans also often issued decrees to show that the Sufis were subservient to the system of the Sultanate and owed their allegiance to them. Such attempts from either or both sides made the relationship uncomfortable, particularly when such decrees, advice or recommendations went unheeded. Just before

the dawn of the Sultanate, the first stretch of incompatible relation arose between Pithaura (Prithvi Raj Chauhan) and Muin-al-Din Chishti. The details have been reported in *Akhbar al-Akhyar* as under:<sup>16</sup>

“When Muin al Din came to Ajmer, Pithaura was reported to be the king of ‘*Hindustan*’; Muin al-Din was busy praying to God at Ajmer at that time. One day, a Muslim devotee of Shaikh Muin al-Din narrated to him some discomfort caused to him by King Pithuara. The Khwaja, thereupon, sent some recommendations to Pithaura in his favour, but the King did not accept the recommendations.” He said:

این مرد در اینجا آمده است و نشسته سخنان غیب می گوید

“He (Khwaja) had come here and on settling down at the place, (merely) talked about otherworldly matters.”

When the Khwaja learnt this, he uttered:

پتھورا را زنده گرفتیم و دادیم

“I captured Pithaura alive and handed over (as a prisoner).”

Subsequently, the army of Muiz al-Din came to India, confronted and defeated Pithaura’s army and captured him.

The Sufis not merely advised the Sultans, but also occasionally rectified an unjust act of the Sultanate. For instance, once an old woman came crying before Shaikh Qutub al-Din Chishti and complained that the King had executed his son without proving the crime. The Shaikh carried his *lathi* and set forth



towards the dead body with his followers, being guided by the woman. Hundreds of Hindus and Muslims had gathered there. The Khwaja said:

الهی اگر این بادشاه سردار کرده است اورا زنده گردان.

“Oh God! If the King has executed him without he being involved in any crime, then make him alive”.

The old woman’s son became alive, before the Shaikh had completed his sentence.<sup>17</sup>

This makes the old proverb ‘the savior is greater than the destroyer or executer’ hold good. It also indicates that the Sufis possessed immense spiritual power and they rarely used it and when they did, it was to rectify an unjust act perpetrated by the Sultanate.

Some incidents indicate incompatible relations between the Sufis and Governors of the respective provinces as well. For instance, Balban had appointed his cousin Sher Khan as the Governor of Multan, who unlike the Sultan did not have any faith in the Shaikh. Sometimes, he spoke ill of the Shaikh. In response to this the Shaikh recited a couplet: <sup>18</sup>

افسوس که از حال منت نیست خبر  
آنگه خبرت شود که افسوس خوری

“Alas! You have no knowledge of my condition. When you come to know, what would be the use of being sorry.”

In a related story of incompatibility between Shaikh Sadr al-Din, the

eldest son of Shaikh Baha al-Din and Mohammad Shah, the eldest son of Balban and governor of Multan was for an altogether a different reason. Once, the Governor in a state of intoxication divorced his wife, the grand daughter of the late Sultan Iltutmish. On recovering his senses, he was deeply grieved and wanted to revoke the '*talak*'. The *Qazi* of Multan contended that only when the lady was be married to another man and then divorced, could he remarry her in accordance with Islamic law. Shaikh Sadr al-Din was asked to act as the intermediate husband, as he was considered the most pious one. The records state that on the following morning, after the marriage, on the request of the bride Shaikh Sadr al-Din refused to give her up. The Governor was enraged and decided to put him to death on the next day. But, the same day, the Mongols invaded Multan and the Governor was killed.<sup>19</sup>

Apart from the above incidents of prosecution of the Sufis or their *murids*, there are numbers of instances bringing home the point that the allegiance of the *murids* was total and relentless and if there was a dilemma between that allegiance to the Sufis and the Sultanate, the former would prevail. This was a concern for the Sultan.

During the reign of Sultan Jalal al-Din Khalji, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya had earned fame. The Delhites had great reverence for him. The Sultan, out of admiration for him, offered a few villages and orchards for meeting the expenses of the *khanqah*. The Shaikh declined politely conveying

that ‘it was not befitting for a *durvesh* to have orchards and villages to look after.’

Sultan Jalal al-Din also desired to meet Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya.

On this Amir Khurd reports:<sup>20</sup>

بخدمت مرشد خود عرض می باید داشت و اگر بخدمت سلطان المشائخ عرض ندارم تحقیق از من برنجد که ترا معلوم بود مرا خبر نکردی اگرچه بان شاه با امیر خسرو سری می گفته بود فاما از سرجان خود برخاست و بخدمت سلطان المشائخ عرض داشت کرد که فردا سلطان بخدمت خواجه آمد بمجریکه سلطان المشائخ این معنی شنید همان ساعت عزیمت آجودهن کردو زیارت شیخ شوخ العالم فرید الحق والدين قدس الله سره العزیز روان شد.

“Sultan Jalal al-Din desired to meet the Shaikh but the Shaikh did not grant permission. Then the Sultan told the court poet, Amir Khusrau that he would visit the Shaikh without notice. Amir Khusrau thought it proper to inform this to his *Pir*, for if the Shaikh learned later, it would cause him despair. On learning this, the Shaikh immediately left for Ajodhan to meet his *Pir*, Shaikh Farid al-Din Shahr Ganj.”

He further reports :

چون این معنی بادشاه شنید از امیر خسرو برنجید که تو سرما کشف کردی و از سعادت پای بوس سلطان المشائخ محروم گرداندی. امیر خسرو گفت از رنجش بادشاه همین خوف جان باشد فاما از رنجش سلطان المشائخ خوف سلب ایمان باشد. بادشاه دانا بود این جواب را استحسن فرمود.

“When the Sultan knew of it, he got very angry and said that ‘he deprived him of the opportunity of meeting the Shaikh’. Amir Khusrau clarified his position by saying that ‘the anger of Sultan could cause loss of his life, but the disappointment of the Shaikh would have caused the loss of ‘*Iman*’ or ‘belief’. The Sultan, as was wise, cooled off<sup>21</sup> (on

learning this).”

This shows that the employees of the Sultans also had full allegiance towards the Shaikhs and in case of a contradiction between their allegiance to the Sultan and to the Shaikh; the allegiance towards Shaikhs would prevail. Apparently, the devotees prioritised their faith in spiritual authority over and above the worldly powers.

However, Barani while dealing with Khaljis gives a different picture of Sultan Ala al-Din who succeeded Sultan Jalal al-Din. He says:<sup>22</sup>

سلطان علاء الدین را چه دل توان گفت و اورا تا چه حد بی التفات و بی باک تصور توان کرد که از هزار دو هزار فرسنگ مسافران و طالبان بر آرزوی ملاقات شیخ نظام الدین می رسیدند و پیر و جوان و خورد و بزرگ و عالم و جاهل و عاقل و نادان شهر دهلی بمصد حیل و تدبیر خود را منظور نظر شیخ نظام الدین می گردانید و سلطان علاء الدین را گهی درد نگذشته که خود بر شیخ آید یا شیخ را بر خود طلبید و ملاقات کند .

“Ala al-Din never wanted to meet the Shaikh, while traders and travellers from thousand of miles and *amirs*, the illiterates, the literates, the ignorant, the old, the young and the children came to see and obtain (his) blessings. But Sultan Ala al-Din neither took pain to visit the Shaikh nor invited him over.”

‘The popularity of the Shaikhs was a major concern for the Sultans. The popularity of one becomes the ground for suspicion and jealousy for the other. This was an important factor for leading to discordant relations between the Sufis and the Sultans. Thus, Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji had become

suspicious and jealous of Shaikh Nizam al-Din's fame.

Amir Khwurd reports: <sup>23</sup>

حاسدان را خار حسد در دل خلیدن گرفت بگوش بادشاه عهد سلطان علاء  
الدین رسانیدند که سلطان المشائخ مقتدای عالم شده است و هیچ خلقی از  
خلق نیست که خاک در او را تاج سر نمی دارند.

“Some people out of jealousy told the Sultan that Shaikh Nizam al-Din had become a world leader (religious head) and the dust of his door is ‘crowned’ by one and all.”

The Sultan became worried on such instigation and wrote a letter to the Shaikh with a view to knowing the Shaikh's intention or attitude towards politics. The purpose was to find out the reality and also to seek the Shaikh's guidance. However, when the letter was given to him, without caring to open it, he asked the public to recite Surah Fateha (an important verse from Quran).<sup>24</sup>

Then the Shaikh said : <sup>25</sup>

حاسدان را خار حسد در دل خلیدن گرفت بگوش بادشاه عهد سلطان علاء  
الدین رسانیدند که سلطان المشائخ مقتدای عالم شده است و هیچ خلقی از  
خلق نیست که خاک در او را تاج سر نمی دارند.

“A *durvesh* has nothing to do with the Sultanate. I reside in a corner engaged in prayer for the Sultan and *mussalmans*. If the Sultan is not happy with my presence, let him say, so that I will move out to some

other place, as Allah's land is so vast.”

Mir Khurd summarises the gist of the letter as under:<sup>26</sup>

سلطان المشائخ مخدوم عالمیان است و در دین و دنیا هر کرا حاجت نیست از آن حضرت بر می آید و حق تعالی زمام مملکت دنیا بپست این بنده داده است بنده را شاید که هر کاری و مصلحتی که در مملکت پیش آید به بندگی سلطان المشائخ عرض دارد تا بداند چه از آنحضرت خیریت مملکت و خلاص جان این بنده باشد فرمان شود تا این بنده بامتثال آن بپوشید و خلاص جان و مملکت خویش از آن داند.

“The Shaikh is popular the world over, as people bring their problems to him for guidance and blessings. The Sultan, on the other hand, has been bestowed with the kingship and hence, the Sultan being concerned about the well being of the people, seeks his guidance. Whatever is considered correct by the Shaikh, will be immediately implemented.”

The content of the letter reflects the worry, the anxiety and the subordination of the Sultan, who attempted to declare that he would carry on the instructions of the Shaikh without any reservation. The Shaikh's not caring to open the letter sent by the Sultan, apparently, was a way of keeping distance from the Sultan. The statement of the Shaikh also reflects his annoyance for not letting him live and pray in peace, indicating an element of incompatibility in the relationship.

However, after this, the Sultan took care to not to annoy the Shaikh. Instead as reported in both *Siyar al- Auliya* and *Akhbar al- Akhyar*, he was pleased with the outcome and desired to meet the Shaikh. The latter, however, conveyed.<sup>27</sup>

آمدن حاجت نیست من به دعای غیب  
مشغولم و دعای غیب را اثرها است.

“There is no need for the Sultan to come, as I am busy in ‘*ghaibana dua*’  
(prayer in absentia), which was more effective.”

This also indicates that the Shaikh while maintaining a distance was extending support to the Sultanate through his prayer. Notwithstanding this, the Sultan wanted to visit him. The Shaikh, on knowing this, said:<sup>28</sup>

خانه این ضعیف دو در دارد، اگر از يك در آید من از در دیگر بیرون روم.

“The old man (he) has two doors in his house; if the Sultan comes by one, I would go away by the other.”

This entire episode is paradigmatic in revealing the coexistence of all three aspects of the distance, support and incompatibility in the relationship between the Sufis and the Sultanate. Probably, after this, Ala al- Din Khalji's attitude towards the Shaikh took a ‘U’ turn. Seeing the change in his attitude, Zia al -Din Barani, probably at this juncture reported:<sup>29</sup>

اگر چه سلطان علاء الدین با شیخ نظام الدین قدس سره ملاقاتی نیامد که در آن سخن شیخ  
بنوعی آزرده شود و با آنکه دشمنان و حاسدن خدمت شیخ از بسیاری از اعطای شیخ و کثرت  
آمد و شد خلق در آستان شیخ و اطعام و اکرام شیخ بعبارتی مودش در سمع آن چنان غیوری  
می رسانیدند و لیکن او بسمع سخن دشمنان و بد گفته حاسدان التفات نکرد و در سنوات آخر  
عهد خود بغایت مخلص و معتقد شیخ شد معذک میان ایشان ملاقاتی اتفاق نیافتاد.

“Although, the Sultan never met the Shaikh, he did not speak a word,  
which could have annoyed the Shaikh in any way. Jealous people still

criticized the Shaikh and reported with considerable exaggeration to the Sultan (about the great gifts of the Shaikh, the crowd of the people frequenting his place and the Shaikh's feeding of the people and his generosity towards them). But Ala al-Din paid no attention to what they said about him. In the last days of his regime, he became a sincere and firm believer of the Shaikh. Nevertheless, the two never met.”

It is clear, however, that the Shaikh desired to keep distance from the Sultan and the Princes, which is further reflected in his refusal in accepting of Princes, Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan, as his disciples. It is another matter that with much reluctance, later he accepted them as his disciples. This was indeed not by virtue of their royal lineage, but due to the fact that they were apparently serious contenders for his discipleship with earnestness and sincerity. This is vindicated by the fact that they cherished their association with the Shaikh till death. Thus, depriving them from his discipleship on account of their relationship with the Sultanate would have been unfair, notwithstanding the Shaikh's deliberate attempt to keep away from it. Nevertheless, their discipleship had no way affected the attitude of the Shaikh towards the Sultanate.

The popularity of the Sufis and the functioning of their *khanqahs* were subject of ‘worry’ and ‘jealousy’ for certain Sultans. This ‘worry’ and ‘jealousy’ gripped a powerful Sultan of Ala al-Din Khalji's stature as well. In



this connections it is reported.<sup>30</sup>

چون آوازه عظمت شیخ در جهان شائع شد و خاص و عام را کرامات خدمت شیخ معاینه گشت، سلاطین صاحب تخت و تاج و شاهزادگان ملک چتر و تاج، خاتان نام دار و ملوک کبار بعد امتحان و معاینه کردن کرامات شیخ بر آستان سودند و به اعتقاد تمام بخدمت گاری و لرادت اقرار نمودند.

“Popularity of the Shaikh had reached its pinnacle (at that time) and all kinds of people ordinary persons, Amirs, Princes and officials, traders as well as Sultans of other states paid visit to have a glance of Shaikh’s miracles and (spiritual) personality. They came with proper respect and belief and to be in the gracious company of the Shaikh.”

The Sultan, apparently, did not like this. Mohamand Jamal Qawam in this connection illustrates a happening at the *khanqah* of the Shaikh in following words:<sup>31</sup>

دران که مدعیان سلطان علاء الدین را هر چیز القاء کردند و سلطان مردی با غیرت بود نحواستی دو نفر یا چهار یک جا نشینند و یا برای میزبانی و دعوتی جمع شوند، چنانچه مخبران برای این کار تعیین بوده اند تا هر روز ازین جنس خبر برسانند و خدمت شیخ دران وقت در دعوت بندگان خدا گشاده و آمد و شده خلق از هر جنس بسیار بود. مانده چندانی که آینده و رونده نصیب خویش برمی گرفت و می برد، این خبر سلطان علاء الدین را می رسانیدند، او را تغییری بکمال پیدا می آمد لیکن او مردی عاقل و پخته بود این معنی بیرون نمی داد یعنی ببینم تا چه می شود.

“Some persons, close to the Sultan, kept informing him about the on going at the *khanqah* of the Shaikh. The Sultan did not like the gatherings in his Sultanate (as groupings, specially of *amirs* etc., had in the past been the cause of change of guards in the *mahal*). At that time, the doors of the Shaikh were open for all and food was served (on *dastarkhwan*) to

all visitors at the *khanqah*. They ate, and also took food to their home.

The Sultan on learning this became concerned, but as he was wise, did not let his feelings known to others.”

The Sufi's *dastarkhwan* served an opportunity to display and determine etiquette. Thus gastronomic ostentation matched the ecclesiastical ostentation, which was the cause of concern for the Sultan because of its striking similarity to court ritual. This reveals another aspect of the Sufi, that he was adept at sophist.

In this case the Sultan sent an informer to verify the truth.

Jamal Qiwam reports:<sup>32</sup>

وقتی مخبری در مائده در آمد، پهلوان نشست. خوجه محمد امام پهلوی خدمت شیخ نشسته بود. به شیخ گفت: آن مرد که در صف نعال نشسته است مخبر است. خدمت شیخ سخن بلند آغاز کردند که: چه شود باشد گواز این جا چه برود چه گوید جز آنکه نانی و گوشتی با یاران و عزیزان و فرزندان خویش می خوریم و باز فرمودند: مبشر بیا و مبشر سر مائده بودی، بیامد. روی بزمین آور به لیستاد. فرمودند "یاران را نانی و شوربانی بیش نمی باشد. شاید بود که کسی را مطبوع نباشد، برو در مائده طاهری زیادت کن. باید که پس هر دو نفری یک صحنک طاهری باشد."

“The informer came (at the *khanqah*) and sat at the *dastarkhan*. Khwaja Imam Pahelvi, who was sitting next to the Shaikh at that time, informed the Shaikh that the person, who was sitting in the front row, was an informer. Thereupon, the Shaikh loudly said that ‘other than the fact that the Shaikh was eating meat and bread with his friends, what else would he (the informer) convey (to the Sultan)’. Then he ordered Mubashshir to not to put excess of bread and meat to avoid distaste and instead place

more of ‘*tahri*’ i.e. a preparation of rice with vegetables and meat flavoured with spices and saffron in such a way that it enables two persons eat out of one plate.”

The Shaikh also once said:<sup>33</sup>

اگر از جهت خلق نباشد که بزبان خواهیم افتاد.

“The food is meant for people and if it were not so, I would be considered untruthful”.

He also had suggested once and said:<sup>34</sup>

از آن جاتا شهر بفرمائیم تا کندوری نصب کنند

“The food from *khanqah* could be taken to the city (Delhi) and served on *dastarkhwan* (for people for eating and taking the left out to home for use of family).”

When the Sultan learned the details, he again sent another informer for further information. Jamal Qiwan, in this connection, reports:<sup>35</sup>

مبشریبا، یارانی که صائم می باشند، حال سحر ایشان چه شود؟ قرص و حلوا و سنبله در مائده مزید کن پیش هر نفری یک قرص و دو سنبله بنه و بگو تا آن بگیرند. ایشان را وقت سحر کار آید. همچنان کردند و این خبر نیز به سلطان رسانیدند. سلطان علاء الدین به فرستاد دانست که این کار خاص برای حق است تا کسی را قوتی به کمال از جهت نباشد از اینها نتواند کرد.

“The Shaikh this time ordered Mubashshir to ‘place more of *shambosas* on *dastarkhwan* and asked (people) to take one each for the *sehri* (food taken before dawn after which one fasts for the day) also’. The Sultan,

on learning this, felt satisfied considering it as a righteous act. After that, he became a believer and refrained from doing anything that could be incompatible with the Shaikh's activities."

The entire episode with the Sultan ultimately reconciling to the ongoing in the *khanqah* falls far short of a conflict and can best be viewed one reflecting incompatibility between the two. As regards the informer, Prof. K.A. Nizami while quoting from the same source has held that a person sitting near Khwaja Muhammad Imam was an informer.<sup>36</sup> In this connection, the relevant portion in *Qiam al-Aqaid* reads as follows:<sup>37</sup>

خواجہ محمد امام پهلوی خدمت شیخ نشستہ بود، بر شیخ  
گفت کہ آن مرد کہ صفِ نعال نشستہ است مخر است .

"Khwaja Imam Pahelvi who was sitting next to the Shaikh at that time informed the Shaikh that the person sitting in the first row was an informer."

It is important to note that Ala al-Din did not allow any gathering or feasts in Delhi. However, the activities in the *khanqah* went on unhindered. The *khanqah* of the Shaikh was some what like today's embassy offices, which have extra-territorial jurisdiction. The Sultans dared not interfere in the affairs of the *khanqahs*, lest it boomeranged on their authority in terms of 'popular disapproval' of their act and wrath or '*bad-dua*' (curse) or '*jalal*' of the Sufis.

The practice of '*sama*' and *raqs* was another cause of incongruence between the Sufis and the Sultans. The *Ulama*, who claimed to be the custodian of Islamic law and custom, were the staunch supporters of orthodox Islamic principles. However their intemperate diatribe against the practice of *sama* at the *khanqah* of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki failed to evoke a response from Sultan Iltutmish as he considered the Shaikh as his spiritual leader. During the time of Ghiyas al-Din Tughluq, the *Ulama* objected to the holding of *sama* by Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. Shaikhzada Husan al-Din Farzam, Qazi Jalal al-Din Soranji and Naib Hakim-i Mulakat instigated the Sultan against the practice. The Sultan convened a *mahzar* (meeting) to discuss the religious aspects of the problem. The Shaikh went to the meeting, which was his first and the last visit to the court. The ensuing synodal discussion turned out to be unpleasant; the *Ulama* invoked the *tShari'at*, whereas the Shaikh retorted by citing from the *Sunna* i.e. the practices of the Prophet, which the *Ulama* objected to. Though, the *Ulama* could not convince the Sultan to promulgate any decree against the Shaikh, the experience led to estrangement between the Shaikh and the Sultan.<sup>38</sup>

The arbitrary decrees or orders issued by the Sultans for adherence by the Sufis had also led to skirmishes. Such skirmishes some times reached serious proportions. Sultan Qutub al-Din Mubarak Khalji had several altercations with Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya in connection with his decrees,

which smacked of arrogance. For instance, the Sultan had built a congregational mosque (*masjid-i jama*) at Siri. After the completion of the mosque, the Sultan sent for all the leading *Ulama* and *Mashaikh* to assemble in the mosque and offer their Friday prayer (*namaz-i jama*). Shaikh Nizam al- Din Auliya did not turn up and conveyed:

“The mosque closer to my place has greater right over me than the new one. It is befitting for me to offer prayers in the mosque, nearer to my *khanqah*.”

This recusant behaviour of the Shaikh made the Sultan very angry. However, the fact that the Shaikh was the spiritual mentor of Khizr Khan, Mubarak’s competitor in the succession to the throne, was the actual cause of his ill will towards the Shaikh. Mubarak thought that the Shaikh was in favour of Khizr Khan’s accession to the throne and thus, developed a hostile attitude towards him. He made scatological remarks about him in the court and offered a reward of one thousand *tankas* to any one, who brought the Shaikh to him. He also had ordered that no one from the *haram* (*mahal*) should ever visit the Shaikh.<sup>39</sup>

Further, a convention had developed that the *Imams*, the Shaikhs and the men of religion assembled on every full moon day (first day of the month) to greet and pay respect to the Sultan. However, Shaikh Nizam al- Din would

send his *murid* and servant, Iqbal to represent him.<sup>40</sup> Bent upon humiliating the Shaikh, Mubarak Khalji sent him the message:<sup>41</sup>“Shaikh Rukn al- Din comes to see me from Multan. How is it that, you, stationed in Delhi, do not visit?”

The Shaikh expressed his inability to pay the visit on the ground that ‘it was not the practice of his elder saints.’<sup>42</sup> However, this did not pacify the Sultan, who was acting on the instigation of ‘*hasidan*’ ( envious people). The young Sultan, in his pride said that if the Shaikh did not come on the first day of the next month, he would have him brought forcibly. <sup>43</sup>

The Shaikh went to his mother’s grave ( see Plate - VIII ) and told her that ‘if the issue was not settled by that time, he would not visit her, thereafter.’<sup>44</sup> The Sultan was executed before the stipulated deadline.

The Chishtis also wanted the government to be run in a just and righteous manner. They often, directly or indirectly, rebuked the rulers for what they considered was wrong. Shaikh Nizam al- Din Awliya often quoted the traditions of the Prophet in order to highlight what an ideal government or society should be like. He used to say, “If in any kingdom, an old woman goes to bed hungry, the ruler would be held responsible and questioned on the Day of Judgment.”<sup>45</sup> At another instance, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya told an assembly of visitors that the construction of *Hauz-i Shamsi* by Iltutmish, in order to fulfill the water requirements of the people of Delhi, had led to his

salvation.<sup>46</sup> In this way, the Chishtis indirectly advised the Sultans about the functioning of the government for the good of the society. In another incident, Shaikh Nizam al-Din's effort to maintain distance from the Sultanate and at the same time, availing of the opportunity, when it came his way, to counsel the Sultan is vividly reflected. Once, Sultan Mubarak Khalji and the Shaikh met at the *siyyum* (40<sup>th</sup> day of death of an individual when *fateha* is recited for bringing peace to the departed soul) of Shaikh Zia al-Din. Barani says that the Shaikh greeted the Sultan, but the Sultan did not reciprocate the Shaikh's greetings.<sup>47</sup> However, Ferishta gives a contradictory account saying that the Shaikh himself refrained from greeting the Sultan and explained his conduct by saying that 'as he was reciting the *Quran*, there was no need of greeting to him'.<sup>48</sup> Nizami, however, on this comments that Barani's account deserves greater credence. The account either way could indicate that there was a strained relation between the Shaikh and the Sultan. Even if Ferishta's account is construed as correct, the greetings could be offered afterwards i.e. after the recitation of *Quran* as per Muslim tradition. For instance, when some body is busy in prayer or in eating food, one is not supposed to offer *salam* at that time. However, immediately after the completion of the same one can offer *salam*, if desired so.

Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, advised Sultan Mubarak Khalji indirectly at the *siyyum* in the following words :<sup>49</sup>



“Whosoever sits in the (bad) company of any body even for a short while, will be interrogated by God on the Day of Judgment as to whether he fulfilled his duty towards God in that (bad) company.”

This was an effective and indirect way of rebuking an arrogant Sultan, with a hint for him to mend his ways to become ‘good’. It was also possibly a reminder to the Sultan that deeds, good or bad, are subject to evaluation on the Day of the Judgment.

During the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the Sufis were made to suffer due to the Sultan’s reclame. He was a tyrannical and oppressive king, who inflicted injuries on saints, through his words and actions. But the Sufis, generally, neither heaved a sigh of pain, nor prayed to God for the destruction of the foundation of the Sultan’s power.

On one hand, he engaged the Sufis in the governance by force and on the other, he showed annoyance towards them. Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, as described by Gisu Daraz, once mentioned to one of his confidants:<sup>50</sup>

ایشان طایفه اند که مارا با ایشان کاری نه، ایشان را با ما تعلق نه ،  
بگویند که از شهر ما برون شوند.

“These are the people (Sufis) with whom we have nothing to do. Nor have they anything to do with us. Tell them to get out of our city.”

This is to be referred in regard to shifting of the capital to Daulatatabad, to which many of the Sufis, though reluctant, had to go. Shaikh Nasir al-

Dingo to Daulatabad, Chiragh Delhi, however, refused to leave the Shrine of his *Pir* behind and go to Daulatabad. This, apparently, embittered the Sultan against him.<sup>51</sup>

Another incident involving bitterness took place when Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq was engaged in the programme of transferring the population of Delhi to Deogir and was planning an expedition against Turkistan and Khorasan to overthrow the descendants of Chengiz Khan. The Sultan requisitioned an assembly of the leading citizens and grandees of Delhi and the neighbouring region. He wanted them to exhort the people to undertake a '*jihad*' against the '*kafirs*' (Mongols).<sup>52</sup> The Sultan also summoned Shaikh Fakhr al-Din Zarradi and Shaikh Shams al-Din Yahya on that day. Shaikh Fakhr al-Din Zarradi, who was reluctant to meet the Sultan uttered repeatedly:<sup>53</sup>

من سر خود پیش این در سرائی این مرد غلطیده می  
بینم یعنی با او مسامحت نخواهم کرد و اوزنده نخواهد گشت.

"I see my head rolling in dust in front of the palace of this man. I am not going to treat him gently and he will not spare me alive."

When the Shaikhs assembled at the court, the Sultan began discussing his plan with Maulana Fakhr al-Din and said, "I want to overthrow the descendents of Chengiz Khan and I need your kind co-operation in the matter." The Maulana replied, '*Insha Allah*' (God willing). The Sultan objected to the use of this term and said, "It indicates indecision." The Maulana justifying

the use of the term said: <sup>54</sup> در مستقبل همین آید. "It is used for the action to be carried out in the future." The Sultan and the Shaikh had a vociferous intellectual argument over the use of the term. Finally, the Maulana brought the argument to an end by saying. <sup>55</sup> "No enterprise can succeed without the use of this term. It indicates affirmation and not avoidance."

The Sultan then ordered the mid day meal to be served thinking that the Shaikhs would consider this as an honour. A Chishti saint had never dined with a ruler before this and the Maulana ate with great reluctance. While eating, the Sultan took out chunks of meat separating it from the bones and gave to Shaikh Fakhr al-Din. During this the Sultan asked Maulana Fakhr al-Din for some advice on which he could act. Without hesitating for a moment the Maulana advised the Sultan: <sup>56</sup> غضب فروخورید. "Get rid of the beastly anger that has gripped you". The Sultan asked: کدام غضب "Which anger?" The Maulana replied: غضب سبعی "Beastly anger."

Apparently, the Sultan took the advice, at least for that moment, because he did not react in the typical ruthless manner characteristic of him even after being rebuked so bluntly. Such counselling or advice by the Sufis to the highest temporal power of a kingdom underlines the fact that the Sufis were not concerned about the authority the Sultans held and did not hesitate in counselling them, when they found the Sultans arrogant or overbearing.

After the meeting and the lunch, the Sufis and others were gifted of

bags full of *tankas* and some expensive green and black cloth. However, Maulana Fakhr al-Din Zarradi paid no attention to the gifts. An employee of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, who was a disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, stepped forward; picked up the Shaikh's shoes under his arm and carried the gifts to the servant of the Shaikh for distributioin among the needy.<sup>57</sup>

On seeing this, the Sultan was enraged. In a fury, he said:<sup>58</sup>

ای مزو روشکالی این چه حرکتها بود که کردی اول کفشهای فخرالدین  
را زیر نعل گرفتی بعده جامه دهیم او خود بستدی و اورا از تیغ من  
خلاص دهانیدی و بلائی او بر خود گرفتی

“You short stature fellow of a secretary (*dabir-i kolah*)! What happened to you that you carried the presents of the Shaikh and picked up his shoes in my presence? You saved the Maulana from my sword and took the same upon yourself.”

The Sultan's hand went to the hilt of his sword. At this the secretary said:<sup>59</sup>

اگر مرا به جهت محبت حضرت سلطان المشایخ  
بکشند درجه شهادت یابم زود تر بخدمت برسم و از  
ننگ شما خلاص یابم

“He is the *Khalifa* of my *Pir* and hence, picking up his shoes was an honour for me. If you want to kill me for my love towards *Sultan al-Mashaikh* (Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya), I am ready. I will get rid of the torture of your company and become a *shaheed*.”

However, the Sultan inflicted no injury to the disciple.

This incident highlights the relationship of ambiguity between the Sultan and the Chishti Shaikh. Although, the Shaikh was reluctant to meet the Sultan, yet, he went to his court and also dined with him. However, while dining he appeared reluctant to eat and paid no heed to the gifts given by the ruler. This was a cause of concern for the Sultan, because things which were considered an 'honour' by others, were not considered so by the Chishti Shaikh. In fact, it seems from the Shaikh's behaviour that it was an 'honour' he was conferring on the Sultan by visiting the court, dining with the Sultan and allowing the gifts to be given to his servant.

Not only were the Sultans relegated to an inferior position by the behaviour of the Shaikhs themselves, but also by the behaviour of their own nobles whom the Sultans employed and paid. There were many other incidents, when the employees of the Sultans paid more respect to the Shaikhs, than they did to the Sultan. It was to counter this attitude of the nobles that Sultan Mubarak Khalji issued orders banning the visit of the '*amirs*' and the '*maliks*' to the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya.

Talbegha Boghdah, a noble of Sultan Mubarak Khalji was an ardent follower of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. Once, Mubarak Khalji (referred to as Sultan Qutub al-Din by Barani), in a state of intoxication asked Talbegha Boghdha کلاه از سر دور کن - 'put off the cap', which was symbolic of his

association with Shaikh Nizam al-Din. The Sultan asked him thrice and even took out his sword, but, Talbegha did not disgrace the cap bestowed by his spiritual mentor.<sup>60</sup> Then the Sultan took out his sword and told:<sup>61</sup>

کلاه از سر دور کن والا سرتو برانم

“If you do not obey and remove the cap, your head will be chopped off.”

Upon this, he came forward, bowed his head and said:<sup>62</sup>

خداوند عالم کلاه شیخ بر سر نهاده ام نه از برای آنکه از  
بیم جان دورکنم گو سربا این کلاه برود.

“Oh Sultan! For the sake of life, I will not remove the cap given by the Shaikh, even if the head is separated (from the body) along with the cap.”

The Sultan was pleased (or pretended to be? with his steadfastness and said the gathering: `مرید این چنین باید` “A *murid* be like this.”

He then enquired as to how he could know whether they (people gathered there) were like that.<sup>63</sup> This was, apparently, told by the Sultan to his men to induce or advice them to be loyal to him, as per the standard set by Talbegha’s loyalty to the Shaikh.

The Sultan then asked Talbegha the cost of the bread he had (*nans* from Shaikh’s *khanqah*). Talbegha said that each *nan*’s cost was thirty five thousand *tankas*. The Sultan offered him seventy thousand *tankas* and a *khirka* (a garment symbolizing his appointment to a higher position), apparently, due to his devotion. <sup>64</sup>

Talbegha Boghdah ( تلغه بغده ) is referred so in Qiwwam al-Aqaid, but as Talbegh Yaghdah by Nizami <sup>65</sup> & others.

Boghdah thereafter went to the Shaikh, narrated the episode and offered the entire money to facilitate the spending on the kitchen of the *khanqah*.<sup>66</sup> The Shaikh refused to accept that and asked Iqbal to get something for him. Iqbal brought two handfuls of gold coins and gave to the *malik*. The Shaikh, then, asked him to look out into the arch and on doing so Talbegha saw a *dariya* (river) and a jungle full of gold.<sup>67</sup>

This incident highlights the fact that if a noble was a disciple of a Shaikh, he displayed great respect to the Shaikh even at the cost of the displeasure of the Sultan and even if he was threatened with death. It also further reveals that whatever the Sultan possessed and could offer, the Shaikh probably possessed in greater abundance and was still not concerned about the possession. This was a matter of worry for the Sultans and a cause for incompatibility in Sufi-Sultan relations.

During the time of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the saints bore the fortune of torture through words and deeds. Abdul Haqq Muhaddith had expressed surprise and pain at the insolence of the Sultan in annoying a Shaikh of Nasir al-Din's stature.<sup>68</sup> Once, the Sultan sent him food in gold and silver plates. This was with twin objectives i.e. he if took the food, the Sultan could question

the legality of eating from costly metallic bowls by a Sufi and if he did not, the Sultan might punish him for disobedience. The Shaikh, in an attempt to balance out the ideal and the practice, took out some pickle, placed it on bread and ate it. Thus he disappointed the Sultan.<sup>69</sup> By consuming a small quantity, he conveyed that he was not interested in eating the princely, luxurious food. By taking out and placing it on the bread before eating meant not eating directly from the expensive metal platters. Instead it was eaten out from the bread. Thus, he indirectly rejected the Sultan's direct offer by eating out the food after transferring it to the bread.

It is also recorded that the Sultan appointed him in charge of the wardrobe (*jamadar*) to humiliate him.<sup>70</sup> The Shaikh bore all these, in deference to the instruction of his master. The Sultan had developed an aversion towards the Shaikh and assigned to him the task of minions, like serving betels, tying turban, and clothing the Sultan. When he refused to perform these, the Sultan gave a blow on his nap and imprisoned him. The Shaikh, then, unwillingly accepted the service and managed to get out of the prison.<sup>71</sup> This account has not been mentioned by any other contemporary writer and hence, was rejected by many including Abdur Rahman Chishti and Muhammad Bula Chishti as gossip.<sup>72</sup> However, irrespective of the validity of the story, it is evident that the Sultan attempted to torture him, time and again. Shaikh Burhan-al-Din, in this connection had written a letter



to him expressing his sympathy.

The letter contained the following quotation:<sup>73</sup>

تا بر سر عاشقان بلائی نرسد      آوازه عشق شان به جائی نرسد  
رو بر سر کنگره سرمردان بین      تامردان را خار بیائی نرسد

“So long as some calamity does not (befall on) visit the lovers, their fame of love does not reach the Beloved. Go and behold the heads of the brave men fixed as turrets; not a thorn pricks the feet of the coward.”

The Shaikh replied with the following couplet:<sup>74</sup>

چون حوالت‌های این ضربت زجای دیگر  
است تنگم آید گر بگویم کز فلان رنجیده ام

“As the source of the torture and thrashing is different (from what people think), I feel ashamed to say I am aggrieved with such and such person.”

The Shaikh refused to curse or wish ill for the Sultan, which shows the magnanimity of a Chishti Shaikh. From the *Siyar al-Auliya*, however, one can easily infer that the Sultan used to assign missionary and administrative works to the saints, because of their morality and piety. Shaikh Nasir al-Din himself appeared to have said that Caliph Umar once refused to appoint a man as governor, because he had not read the *Quran*.<sup>75</sup> The *Siyar al-Auliya* reports that the Sultan assigned nine important saints important tasks. They included Shaikh Fakhr al-Din Zarradi, Shaikh Shams al-Din Yahya, Shaikh Qutab al-Din Munawwar, Khwaja Karim al-Din Samarqandi, Syed

Qutab al-Din Hasan Kirmani, Syed Kamal al-Din, Shaikh Muizz al-Din, Shaikh Iman al-Din and Shaikh Mazhar al-Din.<sup>76</sup>

He engaged Maulana Fakhr al-Din in his scheme against the Mongols, as explained earlier, Shaikh Shams al-Din for propagating Islam in Kashmir, Khwaja Karimu al-Din as *Shaikh ul Islam*, and so on. Mir Khurd mentions that the Sultan used to force the Sufis to engage in *shughl*.<sup>77</sup> He coerced the Sufis the Sufis to accompany him in the military campaigns. He had taken Shaikh Nasir al-Din to Gondal, apparently, as he was not happy with the Shaikh. However, the Sultan fell ill there and subsequently died. It is left to imagination, whether, it was a natural death or was a result of forcing a Shaikh to perform tasks, which his mentors had never practiced and had asked him to not to perform.

The attitude and behavior of Muhammad-bin Tughlaq as a Sultan towards the Sufis was in striking contrast to his behavior as a Prince. As a Prince he used to visit Shaikh Nizam al-Din, wait for him, was reluctant to sit before him out of reverence, felt happy when referred to as Sultan indicating prophecy of kingship. But, when he became Sultan, his attitude and behavior towards the *Khalifas* of that Shaikh whom he revered so much, was far from considerate and respectful. This indicates that whenever the Sultans or Princes were on a weak wicket, they sought moral and spiritual blessings of the Sufis. It also indicates that the Sultan's attitude and behaviour towards the

Shaikhs was transformed by the inputs of the people around them. Thus, when the *Ulama* or the *maliks* instigated them, they used to behave differently. As far as Muhammad bin Tughlaur is concerned, he was suspected of being under the influence of a disciple of Ibn Taymiya(d. 1328A.D.).

Barani, however, has a different story to tell. He says that the Shaikh installed Firuz as the Sultan, in the absence and illness of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq. The Sultan got both of them arrested and ordered for their execution. But before it materialised, he breathed his last.<sup>78</sup> However, no other contemporary record corroborates this. Prof. K.A. Nizami, however, believes that the Shaikh was unlikely to be involved in a coup.<sup>79</sup> It has been recorded that the Shaikh had requested Firuz to ascend the throne after the death of the Sultan.

During the last phase of his life, Sultan Mohammad bin Tughlaq had gone to ‘Tehta’, which was at 1000 *karohs* away from Delhi. There he called for Shaikh Nasir al-Din, and when Shaikh Nasir came, he did not treat him with the respect that is due to a Sahikh.

Mir Khwurd reports:

آن احتمال ایشان بادشاه مذکور را  
از تخت سلطنت در تخته تابوت  
کرده در شهر آورد-

“The weight of the disrespect shown to them (Shaikhs), brought him down

from the ‘*Takht-i Saltanat*’ ( throne ) to the ‘*Takht-i Tabud*’ (coffin).”

People, on the death of the Sultan, asked the Shaikh as to why the Sultan ill-treated him. The Shaikh replied:<sup>80</sup>

که میان من و حق جل و علی معامله بود آن را بدین برداشتند

“There was a dilemma between me and God. It was settled like this.”

Mir Khurd believes that the Shaikh considered it as a God sent punishment for certain lapses.<sup>81</sup>

Similar had been the fate of his father, Sultan Ghiyas al- Din Tughlaq . Barani holds that the Sultan while coming back from his Bengal expedition had issued an imperial order to Shaikh Nizam al-Din to leave Delhi, before the Sultan reached there. When the Shaikh received the imperial order, he remarked: ‘*Hanuz Delhi Dur ast*’ (Delhi is still far away). The Prince, Juna Khan (future Mohammad bin Tughlaq) had made elaborate arrangement for the reception at Afghanpur. However, during the reception, the pavilion that had been constructed for the purpose collapsed and the Sultan was buried under it.

It could be seen that the Sufis’ participation in the warfare by registering their presence or *dua* or spiritual support by offering an arrow or staff could bring victory for the Sultanate, but their withdrawal from the campaign as in case of Ibrahim Lodi (refer to previous chapter) or curse on a King (refer to Muin al-Din’s curse on Pithaura) or ill treatment of the Shaikh in a campaign

such as in the present case, could bring about defeat or death to the Sultans.

Forcing for *sughal* was indeed a major cause of incompatibility between the Sufis and Sultans. Shaikh Nasir Al-Din was not the only one who suffered at the hands of Mohammad bin Tughlaq. The Chishti Shaikhs usually, firmly refused to join government service (*shughl*) though they did have followers who were in the service of the State. Once, Shaikh Shihab al-Din was asked to join government service, which he refused. This made Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq become furious and he ordered the jurist, Zia al Din Sunami, to pull out Shihab al Din's beard. The jurist refused; so both he and the Shaikh had their beards pulled out. The Sultan then forced Zia al-Din to go to Telangana and Shihab al-Din to Daultabad.<sup>82</sup>

Shaikh Shihab al-Din, who was called *haqq-gu* (the truth teller), came back to Delhi at a time when the Sultan had commanded everyone to call him Sultan Adil, 'Sultan Muhammad, the just'. In fact, Muhammad Tughlaq even had his coins struck with this epithet (*Adil*) and named the fort in Delhi as Adilabad.<sup>83</sup> Provoked by the irony of the situation, Shaikh Shihab al-Din told the Sultan on his face that he was a tyrant and enumerated his injustices, including the ruining of Delhi and the transfer of the populace to Daulatabad. The Sultan responded by having the Shaikh brutally killed, which itself is a curious proof of his justice.

Once, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq summoned Maulana Shams

al-Din Yahya, an eminent Sufi and disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, and ordered him to migrate to Kashmir and spread Islam there. However, the Shaikh saw his *Pir* in dream, who was calling him; consequently developed a boil in his chest. The Sultan considered it as a trick to evade going to Kashmir and summoned him to inspect personally. On knowing the reality, the Sultan allowed him to go back home. Subsequently, the Shaikh died.

Similarly, another disciple of the Shaikh Nizam al-Din, Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar neither showed any concern when the Sultan visited Hansi, nor cared to meet him. This annoyed the Sultan, who sent Hasan to bring him. The Shaikh explained the reasons for not going to visit him. The Sultan, then offered him one lac *tankas* through Zia al-Din and Firozshah Tughlaq, who was then a Prince, which he refused to accept. On repeated requests, he accepted two thousand *tankas* with much reluctance and got them distributed among the people there and at Delhi.<sup>84</sup> This shows that many Sufis, specially the Chishtis, had little interest towards the gifts from the Sultan; if they accepted, after being compelled to do so because of persistent requests the gifts were immediately distributed among the deserving, indicating thereby that it was the people and not Shaikhs who were the real receivers. They were mere intermediaries for the redistribution of the economic surplus of the state.

Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign was a reign of terror, as he resorted

to forcing the Sufis for *shughl* and hence, the Sufis heaved a sigh of relief at his demise, though ostensibly, they did not wish him ill. The visitation of a scourge (Taimur's invasion) in 1398-99 A.D. dealt a mortal blow to the Sultanate of Delhi. It was a politically volatile situation. In such a situation, the Shaikh sent a message to Firuz asking him, 'whether he would treat the people with justice and equity or should he pray for some other king'. Firuz promised to behave justly and requested the Shaikh to pray for him. This again shows the Sufi's warning towards the future Sultan by keeping the option of blessings open. Probably, it was also a caution to the future Sultan to refrain from forcing the Sufis for *shughl* or any thing else.

Earlier, we have seen that the *murids* of the Sufis had shown their total faith towards the Sufis. Amir Khusrau and Talbegha Bogdha had displayed tremendous respect for them at the risk of losing their lives their lives. In an incident when Khwaja Jahan was brought to the scaffold, he put the cap of the Shaikh on his head and tied the dastar he had received from Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya and surrendered to the executioner.<sup>85</sup> This reflects immense faith in a Shaikh, which a follower upholds till death and probably believes that he would be stronger to face the calamity befalling on him unjustly at the hands of the Sultanate, if he had the blessings of the Shaikh through his *tabarrukat* or other wise. A murid was not afraid of death while upholding '*haq*' and '*halal*'. The same is testified by the incidents of execution

of Khwaja Jahan, Khizr Khan, Shadi Khan and Shaikh '*Haqq-gu*'.

The execution of Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan does not amount to persecution of Sufis, as they were merely *murids* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. Moreover, their execution was mainly due to political consideration, as they were claimants to the throne. However, their faith in God and the Shaikh was unshakable, despite calamity befalling on them. In regard to Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan, when Malik Kafur ordered the blinding of the princes, some claimant or complainant (مدعی) asked them what use was the faith in the Shaikh, meaning thereby if they had faith and the Shaikh had the power, he could have saved them. The Princes replied: <sup>86</sup>

ای مدعی خامکار از آن جهت قصوری و نقصانی نیست بلکه برکت آن که به  
خدمت شیخ پیوستم دست ما را از تصرف دنیاوی باز داشتند و از کردن  
خونیهای ناحق و گرفتن اموال باطل وارهانیدند.

“O misguided and ill informed *Muddai*! This has neither caused any loss nor ill fate.... ”

Turning the table on the prosecuter, they also said:<sup>87</sup>

و من یقتل مومنأ متعمداً فجزاءه جهنم خلدأفیها -

“If a man kills a Believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein (forever).”

They further said: <sup>88</sup>

و از حکم این آیت کلام مجید بیرون آوردند -

“He also saved us from the punishment as laid down in the *Quran*:”



They spelt out the same as under:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي  
بَطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَ سَيَصْلُونَ سَعِيرًا

Those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans!

Eat up a fire into their own bodies:

They will soon be enduring a blazing Fire.”

(*Al-Quran-S. IV: 10*)

The Princes, further, clarified their position by saying :<sup>89</sup>

اگر بینائی ظاهراً از ما برگرفتند روشنائی باطن برماگشادند . دانستم این همه از  
برکت آن بود که دست به دامن خدمت شیخ زدیم و کار خویش جمله حواله بدیشان  
کردیم و امیدواریم که فردا حشر مازیر علم خدمت شیخ باشد.

“If the eye sight has been taken away from us and the inner light has been opened (in our hearts), it is all due to the blessings of the Shaikh. This was precisely why we held his hand as disciples and entrusted all our affairs to him. We hope that tomorrow, on *Qayamat* (the day of the judgment), we shall be under the banner of the Shaikh.”

However, despite the tension that existed between the two, the Sufis could not be viewed either as conspirators against the state or as ill wishers of the Sultanate. Even when they seemed to have distanced themselves from the State, the link between the *khanqah* and the Sultanate was too strong to be snapped off by metaphysical distance. In fact, by distancing themselves from the state, the Sufis were, in a way extending invisible support to the

state machinery. Despite all its shortcomings, the Sultanate was still an 'Islamic state' or at least it claimed to be so and the Sufis could never be its ill wishers. Therefore, the dissent did not amount to questioning the existence of the State itself.

Yet, the Sufis, especially the Chishtis were perceived as standing in opposition to the Sultanate. Due to this image of the Sufis, people, who had grievances against the state, felt that they had something in common with the Sufis. As such, they began identifying themselves with the Sufis and shared their grievances with them.

The Sufis satisfied these people by articulating their urges against the State. In the process, they also did a great service to the Sultanate. For, any functioning system of government, society or thought works best with built in space for dissent; the absence of such space can cause systemic collapse of the system, as is evident from the collapse of the socialist regimes of the erstwhile Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

The Sufis by distancing themselves from the State and thus acting as the articulators of public opinion against the state, were able to provide this 'in-built system of dissent' to the medieval Indian State. Thus, the Sufis provided a kind of "safety valve" which could vent the urges of dissent against the State. This "safety valve" was an essential factor in preventing the collapse of the Sultanate because, if dissent is accumulated and bottled up, at the time

of release, it possesses immense momentum to even break down the State system. Thus, even when their relations with the rulers were incompatible, the Sufis did not actually possess any antagonistic force towards the Sultanate.

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## CONCLUSION

The Sultanate, generally, was viewed as an Islamic state and the Sufis' support towards the Sultanate seemed plausible and logical. The Sufis, however, did not view the Sultanate as purely Islamic, as it deviated from the principles of Islamic statehood to a great extent. A true Islamic state would be a reflection of the system of the early Caliphate. Hence, their support towards the Sultanate was not unconditional, but issue based.

Muslim statehood initially was formed with the assumption that sovereignty belongs to God<sup>1</sup> and the Sultans or the Kings were representatives of God<sup>1</sup>, who were supposed to rule on the basis of *Shari'at*, rule of law and equity. The head of the state was not a hereditary one, but was selected or elected on the basis of consensus.<sup>2</sup> In this, the wisest, the pious and the popular people played a vital role. The law making process was not arbitrary, but based on consensus or consultations. In the light of this, the early Caliphs refused to nominate their successors and left the choice to the people.

The "right going" Caliphs (the first four) did not regard themselves above law; instead they declared themselves at par with other people, both Muslims and non-Muslims.<sup>3</sup> They also appointed judges, who, they declared, had the powers to give verdict against the Caliph<sup>4</sup> and uphold justice at any cost. Thus, in a court of Zaid when Umar, the second Caliph was given

respect as due to a Caliph when he came there as a party to a case, Umar declared that Zaid was unfit to be a judge so long as Umar and an ordinary man did not stand equal in his eyes.<sup>5</sup>

Another feature of an ideal Islamic state, as prescribed by the early Caliphs, was to treat the treasury or *Bait al-Mal* as the trust from God and the people. The Sultans were forbidden to use the money for the fulfillment of their personal needs and the wars which were uncalled for.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the concept of kingship or statehood in Islam was democratic and welfare oriented. The selection of Iltutmish as the ruler and his and Sultan Nasir al-Din's rule, broadly followed the above said principles of Islamic state, to a reasonable extent. They did not indulge in luxury, administered justice scrupulously and led simple and pious lives. However, successive rulers specially Balban and thereafter indulged in court grandies and etiquette and the projection of a higher self image, mainly to put the *amirs* on hold, denying them the right to choose the successor to the throne. The theory of the Divine origin of kingship was brought into the picture by projecting themselves, as the representatives of God and disobedience to them would be disobedience to God. This theory was in sharp contrast to rule of law and equality before law practiced by the early Caliphs that was symbolic of ideal Islamic state. Earlier, the Caliphs were mere trustees of God and now the shift was to project the rulers as inviolable embodiment of

Divinity, whom every one should be subjected to without question.

The public treasury was also not used hitherto for the purpose expressed by the early Caliphs. There was lip service paid to the Islamic principles, which were used selectively to pursue personal agenda or interest. The *Ulama* with no hold on the social fabric, as it was predominantly non-Muslim, had negligible impact on the Sultanate. Thus, the Sultanate could not be termed as Islamic in true sense of the term.

The Sufis sourced their inspiration from two of the early Caliphs – Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Ali and linked their descendancy to either of them. Thus, their conception of ideal Islamic state was different from the Sultanate on Indian soil. So they commented though rarely upon administration of justice concept of equality, use of treasury for welfare activities, selection of *wazir* with sense of justice and equity etc. Thus, in the same vein Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (1314 -1384 A.D.), a famous Sufi of Kubraviya *silsilah* of Kashmir, had observed that a ruler who transgresses the limits of the *Shari'ah* is really an enemy of God and the Prophet.<sup>7</sup> However, such utterances could be termed as luke-warm and vain attempts of Sufis to reform the state apparatus. Probably, their acute awareness of their limitation in this regard could be a factor for their attempt of distancing from the Sultanate.

The Sufis were well wishes of the Sultanate for the reasons that the Sultanate was in a formative stage, the Sultans respected the Sufis, other

alternatives were unlikely to be favourably disposed towards them and the Sultanate was instrumental in consolidation of Islam and Islamic principles,.

The concept of the selection of the executive head, though an ideal principle, proved to be dangerous for the institution of Caliphs at later stage. This led to successive wars of succession and bloodshed. The Sultanate being “Islamic Sultanate” could not be away from the impact of this. In the absence of principles of primogeniture in succession, then *amirs* interpreted the principle or use of it in their favour. Politics of succession accompanied by bloodshed became a distinct feature during the period of the Sultanate. Here, the Sufis support for succession was vital, as there were folklores of bestowal of kingship by the Sufi. The Princes vied with each other in seeking such support or blessings.

During the Sultanate period the institutions of the Sultanate, the *khanqah*, the mosque, the *Ulama*, the *amirs* or nobles were construed as the main pillars of Islam. In case of the ‘mosque’ and the ‘*Ulama*’, the element of flexibility in their operation, appeared negligible. Their area of operation was limited to matters pertaining to religion only. The Sultanate as an institution, at initial stages gave credence to Islamic principles to a greater extent, which slowly and steadily got diluted. It became more and more secular. But at the same time, it being dictatorial lacked firm grounding with the populace. *Amirs*’ were basically concerned with the power politics. Thus, it

was the Sufis and their *khanqahs* who played a very important role in getting Islam acceptable to the majority section of the society. Once, the existence of Islam was accepted, the Sultanate also gained acceptability.

The Sultanate at initial stages had little knowledge of the Indian socio-political ethos and institutions. They were also engaged in continuous wars with local rulers. The Muslim nobles had made their life difficult, while Hindu Chiefs withheld taxes. Thus, they needed diplomacy, superior military forces and check on their nobles. They had superior military forces, but they lacked diplomacy and check on the nobles (except Balban and Ala al-Din Khalji). In addition, the Mongol conquest Western Asia exercised a decisive influence on the 'infant' Delhi Sultanate. The 'Mangol' threat was looming large on them.

To face such a situation, they expanded their army and invaded Hindu territory to loot and plunder, so that they have the wealth to sustain the army. Attack on new territories also served twin purposes of training and engaging the army.<sup>8</sup> With the Mangol threat and hostility of Rajputs looming large, the infant Delhi Sultanate felt the need for symbolic legitimization or sanctification of the Muslim presence in the alien land, which would ultimately sanctify their position. They constructed mosques to expand Islam and gave stipend to those who led the prayers officiated in the mosques, but there was a limit to such an expansion, as India was a vast country with its enormous

population and number of small kingdoms. Under these complex and unfavorable circumstances, it was impossible to run the government without some outside help. Thus, the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate made desperate attempts to find a source from which they could draw their authority.

A potent source of authority was the Caliphate, of which the Sultanate theoretically was a part, as the prestige of the Caliphate as an office traced back to the authority of Prophet Muhammad. Rulers continued to pay lip service to the Caliphs and went through the ritual of asking the Caliphs for investiture with the positions they had already gained by the force of arms. This procedure gave the fiction of legitimacy to the rulers whose only claim to authority was the sword. The name of the Caliph was inscribed on coins and the *khutba* was read in his name. However, the conduct of various rulers of Delhi Sultanate indicates that the association of their names with the Caliphate was more of an act of perpetuating memory rather than a formal recognition of an authority beyond the bounds of their kingdom. With the Mongol conquest of western Asia, the Indo-Muslims were isolated from the rest of the Islamic world. Thus, not only it gave the rulers of the Sultanate independence, but also forced them to struggle to maintain the nascent state without outside help. However, the pretence of Caliphal supremacy was upheld, even in the absence of a meaningful Caliphate.

But the idea of the Caliphate as a meaningful source of legal authority

for the Delhi Sultanate did not work in a land where majority of the population were Hindus, who did not recognise the authority of the Caliphate. In fact, the Caliphate held no popular appeal even from a wide section of the Muslim population. The existence and activities of the Shiite Arabs and the Arab oriented Ismaili sects in India seem to be among the important factors that led the Turkish rulers of Delhi, to proclaim time and again, their association with the Abbasid Caliphate representing the orthodox *Sunni* community and the glorious days of the Turks. Therefore, despite its effective importance in the Delhi Sultanate, it was not so much an appeal for recognition either for the Muslims or for the Hindus.

Then of course, there was the *Shari'at* from which the Sultanate could draw its authority. But strict adherence to the principles of the *Shari'at* was not possible in a land of varied religious beliefs. In any case the essential concern of the rulers was their survival and consolidation of political gains and not enforcement of the *Shari'at*. Their existence at the helm of political supremacy depended on the acceptance of their authority by the bulk of the Indian population, whose total alienation would have been suicidal for them. Consequently, the *Shari'at* was seen as an ideal, rather than a necessity and the state used the *Shari'at* as a tool whenever it was found suitable. However, no ruler openly rejected the *Shari'at*.

In any case, the *Shari'at* held no popular appeal either for the Muslim

masses because it represented formal Islam of the 'book', or for the Hindus due to its obvious connotations. Thus, the *Shari'at* too, failed to function as a source of authority for the Delhi Sultanate. Generally, the rulers pretended to pay lip service to the *Shari'at* in order to ostensibly please the *Ulama*, who were supposedly 'the leaders of the Muslim public opinion'. But, the *Ulama* too were unable to provide the much-desired legitimacy to the Delhi Sultanate. In fact, the *Ulama* could never provide effective leadership to the Indian Muslims as they represented orthodox Islam. They held no popular appeal for the masses, be it Muslims or Hindus.

While the Turks made desperate attempts at legitimizing their rule, it was, perhaps, understood by them that a state, which rested on military strength could not last for long and that mass support was an essential feature of a successful state. While, Turkish ethnicity and Islamic religious identity was a prominent feature of the Sultanate, in practice the patronage of the regime clearly required the support of Hindus who constituted the bulk of the population. Though the support of the Hindus was a greatly sought after commodity for the Sultanate, it was to be made sure that no such step was taken which was against the ethos of Islam. A very delicate balance had to be struck. Thus in this situation it was best for the Sultanate to derive its legal authority from a source which was indigenous and yet possessed an identity which was Islamic in character.



Finding itself in the midst of a complex socio-political situation, when the Caliph, the *Shari'at* and the *Ulama* failed to give it the legitimacy it needed, the Sultanate found an easy solution to its problems; it sought to draw its authority from the Sufis. The "tradition of the Sufis" served a dual purpose. While it provided a local Muslim identity, which bound the newly formed community to the land where they dwelt, it also catered to the mental and emotional needs of the Hindus. There are numerous anecdotes of *Yogis* visiting the Shaikhs.<sup>9</sup> The Sufis were not only instrumental in playing down the attitude of hostile resistance of the Hindus but also secured their support for the Sultanate along with the support of the Muslim masses.

The Sufis during the Sultanate period were perceived to possess spiritual excellence and noble qualities. The Sultanate's respect and hostility towards them enhanced their prestige and position. For, when the Sultanate respected the Sufis, they were construed superior in their relative position with the Sultanate and when the Sultanate was antagonistic towards them, the populace felt for the Sufis and admired their magnanimity. When a particular Sultan faced difficulty or death, after being hostile to a Sufi, people attributed it to the 'power' of the Sufi. So both ways, it helped enhancement of their position.

On the other hand, the Sufis had their tacit support for the institution of the Sultanate as a whole. They prayed for its existence, expansion and

strength, extended their moral and spiritual support to Sultans, and sent their *Khalifas* in the military campaign. At certain instances the Sufis helped them overcome a crisis situation, rebellion, attack etc. Though the Chistis, were careful to maintain a respectable distance from the state and its functionaries; nevertheless, they rose to its defence whenever their help was required and help was rendered with a clear conscience, for they looked upon the state unambiguously "Muslim."<sup>10</sup> When the benevolent Sufi gave legitimacy to the state, it led the people to view the state as a benevolent institution. In fact , the Sufi-Sultanate relations were punctuated by phases, that can be termed as 'symbiotic'. At this juncture, the relationship can best be described as an inter play between relatively autonomous, yet mutually interacting and inter dependent institutions.

However, at certain instances, there emerged some tensions or incompatibilities in their relationship. However, despite the tension that existed between the two, the Sufis could not be viewed either as conspirators against the state or as ill wishers of the Sultanate. Even when the Sufis, specially Chishtis seemed to have distanced themselves from the state, the link between the *khanqah* and the Sultanate was too strong to be snapped off by metaphysical distance. In fact, by distancing themselves from the state, the Chishtis were, in a way extending invisible support, a silent approval to the functioning of the Sultanate. Despite all its shortcomings, the Sultanate was

still an Islamic state, or at least it claimed to be so; and the Sufis could not to be its ill wishers. Therefore, the occasional Sufi dissent did not amount to questioning the existence of the state itself. The Sufis, by distancing themselves from the state or by having some incompatibilities in the relationship, were acting as the articulators of public opinion and were able to provide the in-built system of dissent or criticism to the medieval Indian state. This was a sort of “safety valve” in preventing the collapse of the Sultanate.

An important factor, which was responsible for the great popular appeal of the Sufis, was their endless piety. They were perceived as extremely pious endowed with all conceivable virtues. In this piety of the Sufis, the people saw the extrapolation of their own urges to become pious. They tried to identify themselves with the saints and to follow their ideals.

The Sufi attitude towards the people, in contrast to that of the governing class and *Ulama*, was characterized by greater dynamism and better understanding of the people. They opened their *khanqahs* to all kinds of people which became centres of cultural synthesis where ideas were freely exchanged and a common medium for this exchange was evolved. The Sufis sympathized with the people in their problems and tried to help them. It was due to the concern which the Sufis showed to the people, the people listened to them and tried to follow what they preached. The Sufis, as such, were able to minimize social tensions and maintain

moral equilibrium in the society, which helped in the smooth functioning of the government.

Apart from market places, there were four other institutions where people could have interface with each other. Those were - the court, the temple, the mosque and the *khanqah*. While mosques and temples were places accessibility for their own religious groups, the court was a place where either nobles and government officials or people with grievances or alleged for certain crimes or for evasion of taxes generally visited. On the other hand, the *khanqah* was an open place for all, where the concept of equality was predominant. The government officials, the *amirs*, the Prssinces, ordinary persons, the merchants, the *yogis*, the *sudras* - all of them visited for spiritual attainment and redressal of their grievances or for both. Thus, it was a place, which facilitated social harmony and co-existence. The Sufis were Muslims and so were the Sultans. Therefore, the grievances of the population against the Sultanate was not construed as a grievance against an Islamic system, due to positive role played by the Sufis in the projection of Islam and their identification with the masses.

Most of the Sufi saints were from higher status of societies i.e. either *sayyids* and descendants of great mystics of Iraq and Persia. Some of them had matrimonial relations with the Sultans. Thus, their social acceptability in a caste dominated Indian society was enormous. This is in contrast to the

Bhakti saints, who were mainly from lower castes. This was one of the reasons for higher class Hindus and Muslims becoming devotees of the Sufi Saints. The Rajput rulers also provided patronage to the shrines of great Sufis. For instance, the Rajputs rulers of Ajmer more often visited the shrines of Shaikh Muin al-Din. Similarly, Baba Farid's shrine was visited by all cross sections of people from Punjab and else where.

As we have seen earlier, the Sufis were wielders of great power. This power generally complemented the state power and the successive Sultans often tried to obtain the support and blessings of the Sufis not only in times of crises, but also in their important campaigns and welfare measures. The Sufis from their side, not only offered their blessings, but also prayed for them and sent their representatives that were reflections of their moral support. They advised in military campaigns as well. This enhanced the sanctity of the projects, campaigns or measures of the Sultanate. The Sufis of early medieval period were trying to keep away from the Sultanate, while giving their support from the distance. However, should there be a need or their interface was unavoidable, the Sufis and the Sultans did meet. Thus, Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya had to visit the court once each in their lifetime, for different and unavoidable reasons. When the time changed the latter's *Khalifas* Nasir al-Din and Shaikh Burhan al-Din, the greatest Chishtis of the north and the Deccan respectively of their

time, had to work in close liaison with the Sultanate. The Suhrawaridis had no inhibitions in meeting the Sultans or visiting the court. However, their visits were also not too frequent. They supported the Sultanate, and occasionally advised suitably. Some of them had incompatible relationship with the Sultanate at certain occasions. For instance, Shaikh Sadr al-Din married the divorced wife of a governor that led to some bickering. Thus, the degrees of incompatibility, cooperation and distance varied from *silsilah* to *silsilah*, from time-to-time and from Sufi to Sufi. Moreover, the attitude of the Sultans had also an important role in the variation of this degree. For instance, the *Ulamas* could not prevail upon Iltutmish against the practice of *sama* by Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, as Iltutmish considered the Shaikh as his spiritual leader. However, Shaikh Nizam al-Din was constrained to attend a *mahzar* where he had to explain the sanctity of practicing of *sama*.<sup>11</sup>

The Chishti *silsilah* got a setback with the demise of Shaikh Nizam al-Din. His *Khalifas* could not withstand the pressures of the Tughaq dynasty and had to tow the directives of Mohammad Tughaq. Shaikh Nasir al-Din was compelled to accompany in the military campaigns,<sup>12</sup> Shaikh Qutub al-Din Munawwar was summoned to the court<sup>13</sup> and many others were forced to go to Daulatabad. This was a case of proximity with incompatibility in contrast to Shaikh Nizam al-Din's relationship of distance and cooperation

with the Sultanate. Thus, the Sufi-Sultanate relationship had undergone various changes, the degrees in each of the aspect changing from time to time with corresponding reverse change in the degrees of other aspects.

The proximity of relationship between the Sufis and the Sultanate was distinctly marked in case of the local Sultanates. For instance, in the south the Sufis attended coronation of the Sultan, the Sultans visited the Sufis, became their *murid* and offered enormous '*futuh*'. This was probably due to their inter-dependence for survival, consolidation and expansion. Almost, similar situation existed in Malwa, Gujarat and Bengal, which we have not dealt at length, lest we lose focus on important issues on the subject.

An interesting part of the study and the finding is that certain Sufi practices became subject both of cooperation and incompatibilities in different situations. The concept of *wilayat* for instance was both supportive and antagonistic to the Sultanate. *Futuh* from the Sultanate reflected the Sultanate's support for the institution of *khanqah*, but it also had become a cause of concern for the Sultanate, when the Sufis refused to accept *futuh* from them. *Sama* similarly could be an occasion, when the *armirs* or Princes marked their presence along with the Sufis, but '*sama*', on the insistence from the *Ulama* had become an irritant in their relationship, as well.

The nomenclature of the leading Sufis was an attempt to put the Sufis on higher pedestal. A Sultan reigned within the boundary of his territory.

But a Sufi commanded respects from one and all, as it made all barriers of kingdoms, religions, castes etc redundant. For instance, Shaikh Rukh al-Din called Shaikh Nizam al-Din, the king of religion<sup>14</sup> or Shah-i Din, which connotes that he was the spiritual leader of the Islamic world. The confidants of Ala al-Din Khalji briefed him that Shaikh Nizam al-Din had become a world leader. Similarly, certain Sufis were called Qutub-i Alam of their time, which connotes that they were the highest figures on the earth. Even the Sultans also gradually addressed them as such.<sup>15</sup> Their blessings and spiritual support in their continuation as a Sultan and governance was high in their agenda. But, certain rulers were jealous of their visible independence and superiority. They attempted to subjugate them by their directives, which were more often rebuffed by the Sufis. However, some of the directives were adhere to. An anomalous situation emerged out of this. But in this situation also, it was the Sultans who were the losers. For people thought such actions or directives as tyrannical and oppressive. The Sufis attempted to show that they had little to do with the state system and thus, the directives of Sultans to the Sufis for doing something or refraining from doing something did not go well with the populace. Such directives had also apparently led to disasters for the Sultans.<sup>16</sup> The wiser ones, thus, made conscious attempts to maintain an amicable relation with the Sufis.

The amicable relationship was also based on the assumptions that both



the institutions were Islamic. However, both in their approaches had also broken the barriers of rigid Islamic boundaries, the Sultanate, due to its political and military compulsions and the Sufis due to their broader vision and adaptability to a complex social fabric. These dynamics in their relation with the local populace had also its ramification in their relationship. Apparently, it would seem that this drifting away from the rigid Islamic principles by both should have brought them closer.

Since, such drifts were neither simultaneous nor inclusive of similar aspects, the space of difference existed. For instance, the Sultans new tax system with no corresponding welfare measures, would not gain the support or approval of the Sufis. Similarly, the grandies of the court structure, suppression of dissent in the system, harsh measures, aristocratic life style of ‘*amirs*’, ‘*maluks*’ etc., appropriation of ‘booty’ in public treasury or by *amirs* were unlikely to be seen by the Sufis with appreciation.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the popularity of the Sufis among the Hindus and the Muslims, the practice of ‘*sama*’, ‘*yoga*’, ‘*chillah makus*’, bowing before the Sufis etc., the concept of spiritual territory as against political territory of the state system, high sounding nomenclature of the Sufis were matters of concern for the Sultanate. In all of these, there were apparent deviations from strict Islamic principles.

Further, the system of Sufism was not as rigid and stern, as the percepts of *Shari’at*. Thus, unlike in the mosques, where worshippers gather to offer

prayers in an orderly and solemn manner, in the *khanqahs* the devotees were free to express their inner feelings the way they like. They were free to choose their method of expressing love and devotion. However, when their interest converged, there were visible support for each other. For instance, the support of the Sufis for Firoz Shah Tughlaq in ascending the throne was to ensure a Sultanate that was favorably disposed towards them. Similarly, the Sufis had their moral and spiritual support for the Sultanate's southern campaign. This not only caused the expansion of the Sultanate, but also that of Islam, which broadened the way for Sufis' area of operation as well. The Sultanate's power in such campaigns increased substantially with the inferred or presumable or direct of support from the Sufis, as it enhanced the 'morale' of the forces.

But when the temporal power was juxta-posed against the Sufi power, one of them had to give way. For instance, Shaikh Nasir al-Din unwillingly had to accept the dictates of the Sultanate, performed services and accompanied in the campaigns. In this, either the Sufi power did not assert itself due to its magnanimous characteristic or it was skeptical of the consequences of defiance. The Sultanate thus had its way. Similar encounter in earlier occasions, had led either to the Sultanate's bending to the wishes of the Sufis or disastrous consequences for the occupants of the throne.

When both the powers merged in a particular situation, each rubbed

off some elements on to the other due to close proximity. In the southern campaign, when the Sufis willingly participated, they apparently imbibed elements of the Sultanate system in their conduct. *Futuh* from Sultanate no more remained a taboo in the south. The Sultans were allowed to visit them and the Sufis attended the coronation of the Sultans. Matrimonial alliances between them were more frequent. Sultans became *murids* of the Sufis. They sent their emissaries to each other i.e. exchange of ambassadors. The Sufis more often guided the Sultans in governance and campaigns. Sometimes they supported the rebels also. Thus, politicking which hitherto was not a subject of their agenda, became a part of their operation. The Sufis, during the close of the Sultanate period and especially in the south, had come much closer to the Sultanate.

The power dynamics between them had also an important dimension to their relationship. The Sultans more often, wanted them to be subjugated to their dictates to show their visible dependence on the Sultanate. They thus issued directives, summoned them, banished them, and showered them with *futuh* and the like.

The Sufis some time rejected such *futuh*, disobeyed the directives, ignored the summons and instead sent their representatives. And even when they went to the court, conducted in such a way as to show their favours towards the Sultanate, instead of their dependence. The dimension took a

different turn when the government employees or nobles showed their allegiance towards the Sufis in preference to the Sultanate.<sup>18</sup>

Further, in a system where prime geniture in succession of the throne had no solid grounding, rule or custom, the Sufis' support was extremely important in the backdrop of popular perception and folklores regarding the Sufis' power of bestowal of kingship. Thus, more often the Sultanate was relegated to an inferior position vis a vis the Sufis. The paintings and miniature of the times, thus, depicted the Sufi sitting on a higher platform, while the Sultan was sitting in a lower platform or in the midst of the people. The Sultans' desire to visit the Sufis and the latter's refusal to meet them also pointed at similar direction. Bahlul Lodi had gone all along to attend a lecture of Shaikh Sama al-Din<sup>19</sup> and similarly Nizam Khan had visited the Shaikhs, when accepted by the *amirs* as their unanimous choice to become Sultan. This brings home the point that the Sufis were placed higher than the Sultans, not merely in popular perception, but also in the perception of the Sultans themselves.

The retrospective probability of existence and survival of the Sultanate without the Sufis could be an important hypothesis to ponder over. The inception of the Sultanate itself is attributed to Shaikh Muin al-Din Chishti's benediction. Further, the Sultanate was threatened from three sides - the powerful Mongols, the local Hindu kingdoms and unpredictable power hungry

nobles. The moral and spiritual support of the Sufis to the Sultanate was very important at this juncture. This, not only boosted the morale of the Sultanate, but also had bearing on others to support the Sultanate.

Apart from government, there are three other characteristics of the state – territory, population and sovereignty. As regards the territory, the Sultanate in its infant stage was confined to Delhi, Ajmer and some other places and was a little larger than other local kingdoms. The expansion of its territory at initial stages was on the basis of expansion of Islam, which was a notion with limited appeal i.e. on the Muslim forces only. Islam was an alien religion and without the expansion of the religion, it was unlikely to expand the army with followers of Islam. Thus, expansion of Islam was very vital to the survival of the Sultanate. The expansion of Islam through sword was extremely impossible in a country like India, as it was very vast with altogether different and deep-rooted culture and civilization, which could not be assimilated. Rather, it had demonstrated its potency of assimilating cultures and systems brought by invaders in the past. Further, the army had to include non-Islamic forces as well, as it needed a much larger army than Islam could offer.

The appeal of Islam was not going to cut any ice with them. A broader appeal was needed. It is here the Sufis could play an important role, as they brought respectability for Islam on one hand and on the other, were instrumental in large-scale conversion. Their broader vision, concept of

equality, services towards the humanity etc. were akin to today's Christian missionary, which led to expansion and acceptance of Islam in the Indian subcontinent. This consolidated the position of the Sultanate.

During the time of the Sultanate, the Sufis had become unchallenged spiritual masters, thanks to the caste ridden Indian society and the absence of adequate spiritual leadership of other religions in the land. The resistance they faced was from within i.e. *Ulama*, the so-called spiritual leaders of Islam itself. The greater the challenge for them, the greater was their popularity. For, the *Ulama* could not challenge the Sufis on their own without the backing of the temporal power. When the Sultanate opposed the 'practices' of the Sufis, the Sufis or '*khanqah*' became object of admiration by those people, who were opposed to the oppressive and dictatorial system of the Sultanate. It became a force where the people's frustration, disappointment, poverty and sufferings could find ventilation. The Sufis' popularity thus did not remain confined to the Islamic boundaries; it went all out to embrace one and all. Thus, Raja Haldar became a *murid* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. This was not detrimental to the system of the Sultanate, as it worked as a dissent or safety valve, so essential for the survival of a system. The institution of the *khanqah* and the Sultanate, in the process of opposing each other, consolidated their position and expanded further. Thus, the Sufis and the Sultanate gained out of this opposition, relegating other forces to inferior

position. The same holds good in the political processes, especially during elections, when various forces rally behind the major forces opposing each other, it leads to bi-popular politics, even in a multiple party system.

As regards the characteristic of sovereignty, the Sultanate was externally sovereign, but to be internally sovereign it needed the acceptance and support of the populace. The Sultanate had come into being on the basis of superior army, military strategy and ammunitions. That was not enough for its sustenance. Its actions needed implicit ratification from its subjects. The subjects were mostly Hindus who were unlikely to support an 'Islamic cause'. Thus the Sultanate's projection of Islamic cause had no meaning to the large sections of people. Their acceptability depended upon the development of a system and ideals acceptable to the people. The *Ulama's* role was not only negligible and limited, but also to a large extent negative. The Sufis, on their part, by way of being accepted by the populace were instrumental in acceptability of the Sultanate; as for the people Islam was what the Sufis practiced. Moreover, the Sufis had earned a position among the lower caste and *sudras* who hitherto shed their disliking or apathy towards the Sultanate. The people of higher class or caste were worried about their social position and political rehabilitation. The support of the Sufis towards the Sultanate had an impact on their understanding of the irreversibility of the establishment of the Sultanate. With a view to adjusting themselves in

the new scenario, they had to dilute their opposition towards and develop a rapport with the Sultanate. The understanding of Islam was also important to feel the pulse and the methodology of the Sultanate. The Sufis came handy for this, as people broadly knew Islam the way they practiced. The devotion or discipleship of the Sufis also was likely to be viewed by the Sultanate in awe.

Thus, in terms of expansion of its territory, crushing of rebellion within its jurisdiction, expansion and acceptability of Islam and consolidation of sovereign power of the Sultanate, the Sufis had extended their tacit and definite support towards the Sultanate. In the functioning of the government and welfare measures undertaken by the Sultanate, the Sufis had a say; for many Sultanas, Princes, *amirs* were their admirers or disciples and a few words from them were considered precious and became 'torch bearer' for their activities.\*\* The Sultanate, without the existence of the Sufis might not have been able to consolidate their position in a short span of time and be able to rule over the country for long three hundred years leaving deep imprint in socio-political sphere of the country. Moreover, it is they who were instrumental in the recognition of the Sultanate, which was so vital for its existence and sustenance. The Sultanate collapsed giving way to the Mughals, another Islamic force, which also revered the Sufis equally or even more, during their reign.



The survival, consolidation and expansion of the Sultanate could have been questionable without the existence and growth of Sufism, which continuously supported it through its tacit, implicit and indirect ways and means. However contrary could be true. Without the existence and expansion of the Sultanate, Sufism could still have thrived in the subcontinent as it imbibed in itself dynamic and flexible characteristics, rejecting the notions of cold formalism, 'orthodoxy', 'exclusivity' of conservative Islamic scholars. It went beyond, crossed the boundaries of Islam, followed pragmatic principles and practices befitting to the Indian soil and socio-cultural ethos. This was precisely why, their relationship with the Sultanate had space for 'cooperation', 'incompatibility' and 'distance', all the three aspects operating independently, interchangeably or also sometimes simultaneously, reflecting a multi-dimensional and complex relationship.

## NOTES

1. *Qu'ran*, IV, 59, 105; V, 44, 45, 47; VII, 3; XII, 40 etc.
2. Alusi, *Ruh al-Madni*, Egypt, 1926, xxv, p.42; Alusi cites the anecdote concerning Prophet Mohammad while on death bed, telling Ali that the *ummah* i.e. the people should decide his successor after his death.
3. M.M.Sharif, ed. *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol.I, Reprinted, 1989, p. 663.
4. Ibid, p.663.
5. Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, Hyderabad, 1936, Vol.I, p.136; cited by M.M.Sharif, ed. *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Vol.I, Delhi, Reprinted, 1989, p.663.
6. Ibn Khatir, *al- Bidayah w-al-Nihaya*, Egypt, Vol. VII, p.137.
7. S. M. Azizuddin Husain, "Jizya - Its Reimposition During the Reign of Aurangzeb", *Indian Historical Review*, Vol. XXVII, No. II, ( July 2000 ); cited from Mir Saiyid Ali Hamdani, *Zakhiratul Muluk*, MS, National Museum, Unpublished.
8. Peter Jackson, "The Mongols and the Delhi Sultanate", *Central Asiatic Journal*, no. 19, pp. 118-156; Shaikh Jamali, *Siyar al-Arifin*, p.129.
9. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*, p.70, pp. 84-85, pp. 245-256.
10. Harbans Mukhia, "Communalism and the Indian Polity", *South Asia Bulletin*, Vol.XI, VOLS. 1&2, 1991, pp.64-65.
11. K.A.Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya*, Delhi, 1991, p.119.
12. Amir Khwurd, *Siyarul Auliya*, p.218.
13. Ibid, pp.253-255
14. Ibid, p.139.
15. *Futuh-i Firuz Shahi*, p.17.tr.118; Sultan Firuz Shah refers him as Sultan al-Mashaikh and Mahbub-i Ilahi.
16. Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p.452. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.80 and *Siyar al- Arifin*, p.77.

17. Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p.332.
18. *Qiwam al-Aqaid*, p.199.ref. to the anecdote regarding Talbegha Bogdha and *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.135.ref.to anecdote regarding Amir Khusrau revealing Sultan's intention of visiting the Shaikh uninformed.
19. *Siyar al-Arifin*, p.259-261.

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Attar, Farid al-Din. *Tazkirat al-Auliya*. Urdu tr. Zubair Afzal Usmani, Delhi, nd. ed. R.A. Nicholson, part-I, 1905, London; part II, Leiden, 1907. The writer himself was a known Sufi and a prolific writer. This work gives detail picture of stages of development in Sufism, specialities and qualities of the Sufis and their sacred sayings, prayers, meditation and practices. It contains interesting stories of the Sufis and their moral teachings. It is written in simple Persian language.

Aufi, Mohammad. *Jawama al-Hikayat*. This is still unpublished. This work was completed in 630 A.H. The author was in the court of Nasir al-Din Qubacha. After the demise (defeat and suicide) of Qubacha, he came to the court of Iltutmish, where he wrote this book and dedicated to Nizam al-Mulk, the wazir of Sultan Iltutmish. The book gives vivid picture of the court, the religious and the political situations and the Sufis of the period.

Babur, Zahir al-Din Mohammad. *Babur Namah*, Turki Text, ed. N. Ilminski, 1857. Persian version, Mirza Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan, Bombay, 1308 A.H./1890 A.D. Eng. tr. A.S. Beveridge, rpt., Delhi, 1990 A.D. The writer was the first Mughal emperor in India. It is an autobiography of Babur, written in Turkish language, which gives a glimpse of conditions of Lodi Period and Afghan-Mughal relations.

Barani Zia al-Din (684 AH – 758 AH), *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi*. Ed: Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Calcutta, 1860. The author was one of the most prolific historians of the Sultanate period. He was born in 'Barn' (Bulandshahr District) of Uttar Pradesh and thus, 'Barani' is suffixed to his name, identical to that of Ali al-Hujwiri (see above). His father was a courtier and so was he and thus, he had also indepth knowledge of court and political life. On the other hand, he was a '*murid*' of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya and thus, had insight to the Sufi and *khanqah* life as well. His writing encompasses the events from Balban's accession (664 A.H.) to six years after the accession of Firoz Shah Tughlaq i.e. the period covers the last quarter of 13<sup>th</sup> century and first quarter of 14<sup>th</sup> century. He projects the image in its entirety and not merely from the Sultanate point of views. He has written this in beautiful language without compromising on the gist of the matter. This source is very important, as he has given important and first hand information of Sufi-Sultanate relationship.

Bilgrami, Abdul Wahid. *Saba 'Sanabil*. Kanpur, 1299 A.H.

Chishti, Ali Asghar. *Jawahiri Faridi*. Lith. Lahore, 1884 A.D. Urdu tr., Lahore.

Dara Shukoh. *Safinat al-Auliya*. Lith. Nawal Kishore, Kanpur, 1900. Urdu tr. Muhammad Ali Lutfi, Karachi, 1982. The writer was the eldest son of Shahjahan and the heir apparent. He had deep understanding about Islamic and Hindu mysticism. This book is one of his important books, which deals with the Sufis and their teachings

and practices.

Dehlawi, Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddis(1551-1642, Delhi). *Akhbar ul-Akhyar*, Delhi, 1270A.H. Urdu tr. Subhan Mohamud and Muhammad Fazil, Delhi, 1990. He, being a saint, has narrated events of the Sultanate period relating to the Sufis, based on his studies of contemporary works, “probably” on folklores and records of the Sultanate period etc. His work, a traditional writing with smooth reading, was completed in 1588-1590. He has described important events in details, giving over all pictures of the circumstances. It is very useful to corroborate facts and events from contemporary sources of the Sultanate period.

Gazzali, Imam, *Ihya al-Ulum*. Arabic Text; Cairo, 1376 A.H. Urdu tr. *Mazaq al-Airifin*, Nawal Kishore, 1875.

Ibn Battuta. *Rihla*. Arabic Text. 1928. Urdu tr. K.B. Mohammad Husain, Delhi, 1345 A.H. English tr. H.A.R. Gibb, London, 1929 and A. Mahdi Husain, Baroda, 1953.

Isami. *Futuh al-Salatin*; ed. A.S. Usha, Madras, 1948. English tr. 3 Vols., A. Mahdi Hussain, Asia Publishing House, 1967-77.

Ismail, Mohammad Kabir b. Shaikh. *Afsana-i Shahan*, MS, British Museum, Ad.24, 409. It contains anecdotes of Lodi Kings.

Jamali, Shaikh. *Siyar al-Arifin*. Edition: Delhi, 1311 A.H./ 1893 A.D. Urdu tr. Ayub Qadiri, Lahore, 1976 A.D. He was in the court of Sikandar Lodi and continued his services during the Mughals also. This book gives details of Chishti and Suhrawardi saints in India, and deals with important issues concerning the Sufis and the Sultans during the period. The work was completed in 1530 to 1536.

Kirmanji, Ali bin Mohmmad. *Ma'sir-e Mahmud Shahi*. It is basically on Sultan Mahmud Khalji (839A.H./1436 A.D. – 873 A.H.-1469 A.D.).

Makki, Abu Talib. *Qut al-Qulub*. 2 vols.,Cairo, 1310 A.H./1892 A.D.

Minhaj al-Siraj. *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*. Ed. Khadim Husain and Abdul Hayy Habibi, Calcutta, 1864A.D. Urdu tr: Ghulam Rasul Mahr, Lahore, 1975. Eng. tr. H.G. Raverty, Calcutta, 1897. The writer wandered about and reached Uchch in 1227 A.D., when Nasir al-Din Qubacha was its ruler. However, he came to Delhi when Qubacha got defeated and then committed suicide. The author held important positions in the Delhi Sultanate and wrote this book in 1259-60 A.D. It contains history of Islam, dealing with the Prophets, the Sufis and the Sultanate. It deals with the history of mankind in 23 stages and contains some poems as well.

Mir Khwurd. *Siyar al-Auliya*. written in 770 A.H.; MS collated and compared by Diwan Allah Jiwaya of Pakpattan; Edition: Mosassa Intasharat e Islami, Lahore, 1885, Chiranjilal, Delhi, 1885. Urdu tr. Abdul Latif, Delhi, 1994. It was written in mid fourteenth century and considered one of the most exhaustive and authentic biographies of the Chishti Shaikhs and their *Khalifas*. The important events are described in a smooth and beautiful way, providing the exact backdrops required for explanation and analysis.

Mushtaqi, Rizqullah. *Waqi'at-i Mushtaqi*. Ed. & tr. I.H. Siddiqui, Delhi, 1993. The work contains anecdotes relating to later Sultanate period, which includes incidences of the period in Gujarat and Malwa.

Nagouri, Qazi Hamid al-Din. *Tawati al-Shums*. The writer, an erudite scholar, was a great Sufi, who had the benefit of the company of leading Sufis of Suhrawardi and Chishti *silsilahs*. He was a vegetarian and had prohibited use of meat in his *siyum* after his death. He completed this work in 1234, in two volumes. The work is a rare one, in as far as, it contains the 99 names of Allah.

Nishapuri, Taj al-Din Hasan b. Nizam. *Ta'j al-Ma'sir*; The writer came from Khurasan, settled in Delhi and wrote this book on the direction of Sultan Qutub al-Din Aibek. The book contains all important events during Sultan Qutub al-Din Aibek and 7 yrs. rule of Sultan Iltutmish i.e. upto 614 AH/1217 A.D. The writing is in difficult language.

Qiwam, Muhammad Jamal. *Qiwam al-Aqa'id*. MS: Osmania University, Hyderabad. Ed. Ahamd Faruqui, reproduced in *Qand-i Parsi*, Vol. VII, May 1994, Cultural House of Iran, Delhi. Urdu tr. Nisar Ahamd Faruqui, Rampur, 1994. The author was the grandson of Shamsul Arifin Qiwam al-Din, a disciple and *khalifa* of the Chishti Shaikh, Nizam-al-Din Auliya. This book is an account of the life and teachings of Nizam-ud-Din Auliya. It gives detail description of Sufi Sultanate relationship during the period of the Shaikh. Important events during Ala al-Din Khalji also find mention in the book. It was written a quarter century after the death of the Shaikh. The writer was in the Deccan and therefore the writing is based on contemporary writings, records and possibly folklores. It is likely that the Sufis and followers who had the company of the Shaikh also might have contributed by stating the facts to the writer.

Shattari, Mohammad Ghousi, *Gulzar-i Abrar*. Urdu tr. Fazal Ahmad, known as *Azkar-i Abrar*, Lahore, 1395 A.H. It comprises the lives of 612 Sufis and *Ulama* and was written during the time of Jahangir.

Sirhindi, Yahya b. Ahmad, *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*. Ed. K.B. Hidayat Hosain, Calcutta, 1931. The work deals with events from Ghori period to Sultan Syed Mohammad.

Suhrawardi, Shaikh Shihab al-Din. *Awa'rif al-Ma'arif*, Arabic Text, Beirut, 1966. English tr. Lt. Col. H. Wilberforce Clarke, Calcutta, 1891. Its Persian version is *Misbah al-Hidayah wa Miftah al-Kifayah* by Izz al-Din Mahmud Kashani; ed. Agha Jalal Huma'i, Teheran. The author was a leading Sufi of Suhrawardi *silsilah*. The book contains important dimensions of philosophy and practices of 'Sufism', including the early Sufis. It was a prescribed book for the Sufis including Chishti Sufis in India.

Tughlaq, Sultan Firuz Shah. *Futuh-at-i Firuz Shahi*, Lith. Delhi, 1885 A.D. Abdul Rashid, Aligarh (with English tr.). M.A. Chughtai, Poona, (with Urdu tr.), 1941. This is an important historical work, in which the administrative system, welfare measures and Sufi saints have got precedence over political events and wars. It also mentions about construction of *khanqahs* and mosques during the period.

### B. Malfuzat

Ali Jandar, *Durar-i Nizami*. Conversations of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, Compiled by the writer. MSS: Salarjang Museum, Hyderabad, (61/5-99).

Amir Khusrau. *Afzal al-Fuwa'id*. Conversations of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, attributed to Amir Khusrau. Mohammad Habib rejects it as 'spurious' source in 'Chishti Mystics Records of the Sultanate Period', Medieval India Quarterly, Vol. I, No.2 (Oct.1950), pp.1-42. However, this is an important primary source containing vital and relevant information.

Amir Khusrau. *Rahat al-Muhibbin*. Conversations of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, compilation attributed to the writer. Urdu tr. *Maqtaba-i Noor*.

Arabi, Zeen Badar. *Mab'adan al-Mani*. Conversations of Shaikh Sharf al-Din Maneri (death.858 A.H./1380 A.D.), compiled by the writer.

Auliya, Shaikh Nizam al-Din. *Rahat al-Qutub*. Conversations of Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shahr (death.661 A.H./1262 A.D.), attributed to have been arranged by Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya (death.734 A.H./1233 A.D.).

Aziz, Shaikh. *Saroor as-Sudur*. Conversations of Shaikh Hamid al-Din Nagauri, compiled by the grandson of the Shaikh. Habibganj collection, Aligarh Muslim University Library.

Ganj-i Shahr, Shaikh Farid al-Din. *Dalil al-Arafin*. Conversations of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, attributed to have been arranged by the Shaikh. The book was commissioned in 633 A.H./1255-6 A.D.



- Ganj-i Shagr, Shaikh Farid al-Din. *Fawa'id as-Salikin*. Conversations of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, compilation attributed to Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shagr. M. Habib considers it spurious. Ed. Matba Mujtabai, 1982. Urdu tr. *Maktaba Jam-i Noor*, New Delhi.
- Hussaini, Syed Mohammad Akbar. *Jawami al-Kalim*. Conversations of Syed Mohammad Gisu Daraz compiled by the writer. It gives deep insight on various issues concerning the Sufis, the politics and the culture during the close of fourteen century. Urdu tr. Muin al-Din Dardai, Delhi, 1994.
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- Ishaq, Shaikh Badr al-Din. *Asrar al-Auliya*. Conversations of Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shagr attributed to have been compiled by the writer. It is considered spurious by Mohammad Habib, "Chishti Mystic Records of the Sultanate Period", *Medieval India Quarterly*, Vol. I, No.2 (Oct.1950), pp.1-42. ed. Lucknow, 1876; Urdu tr. Abdus Sami Zia Sahiwal, 1978. However, it has corroborative value.
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- Qalandar, Khwaja Hamid. *Khair al-Majalis*. Conversations of Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh Delhi compiled by Khwaja Hamid Qalandar in 756 A.H./ 1355 A.D. It contains the thoughts and activities of the Shaikh, in addition to his incompatible relations with the Sultanate. Text: ed. K.A. Nizami, Aligarh, 1959. Urdu tr. *Siraj al-Majalis*, Delhi 1315 A.H.
- Sijzi, Amir Hasan. *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*. Conversations of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, compiled by the writer, who was in the company of the Shaikh for 11 yrs, collected the Malfuzat. It took him 15 yrs. to compile. It is considered the best Malfuzat ever written. Amir Khusrau, in praise of this held that it was more valuable than all of his writings and collections taken together. The language is simple and lucid. MS: Aligarh. ed. Nawal Kishor Press, Lucknow, 1302 A.H. and M. Lalif Malik, Delhi, 1990. Urdu tr. Khwaja Hasan Sani Nizami (*Sajjada Nashin* of the 'Dargah' of the Shaikh). Eng. tr. Bruce B. Lawrence, *Nizamuddin Auliya: Moral for the Heart; conversations of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya recorded by Amir Hasan Sijzi*, New York, 1992.

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**PLATE- I**

*Ka'ba Sharif* at Mecca, *Masjid-i Nabbi* at Madina Munawwara and *Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Muin al-Din Chishti shown in a photograph of a calendar used by *khadims* of the *dargah* during a 'Urs'; the captions in descending order read - the house of Allah, the house of the beloved of Allah ( Prophet Mohammad ) and the house of the beloved of the beloved of Allah. The linkage with Allah and the Prophet is an attempt to show a special position of the Shaikh.







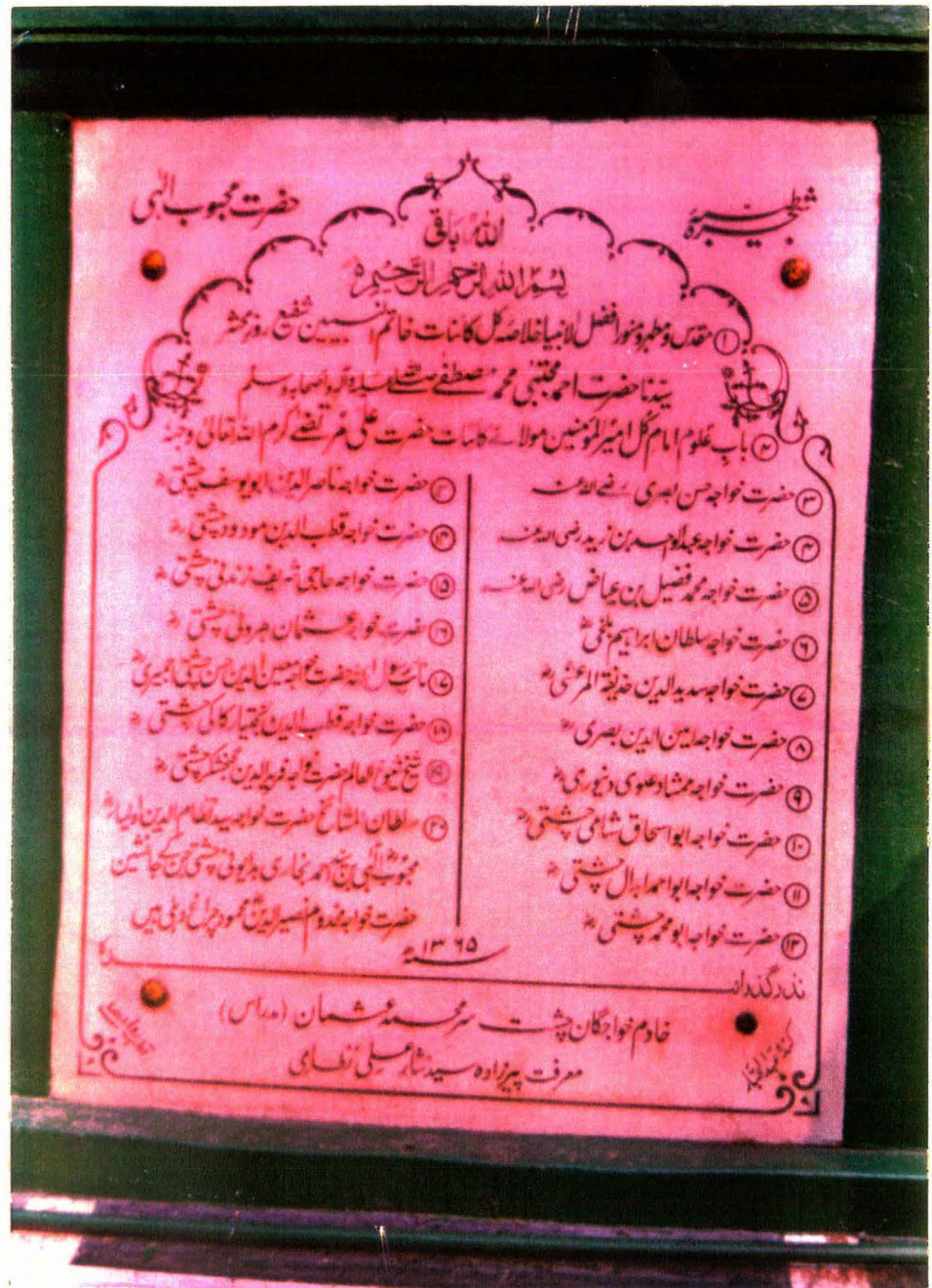


PLATE - III

Shijra of Chishti Sufis on a marble slab found adjacent to the *mazar sharif* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya.

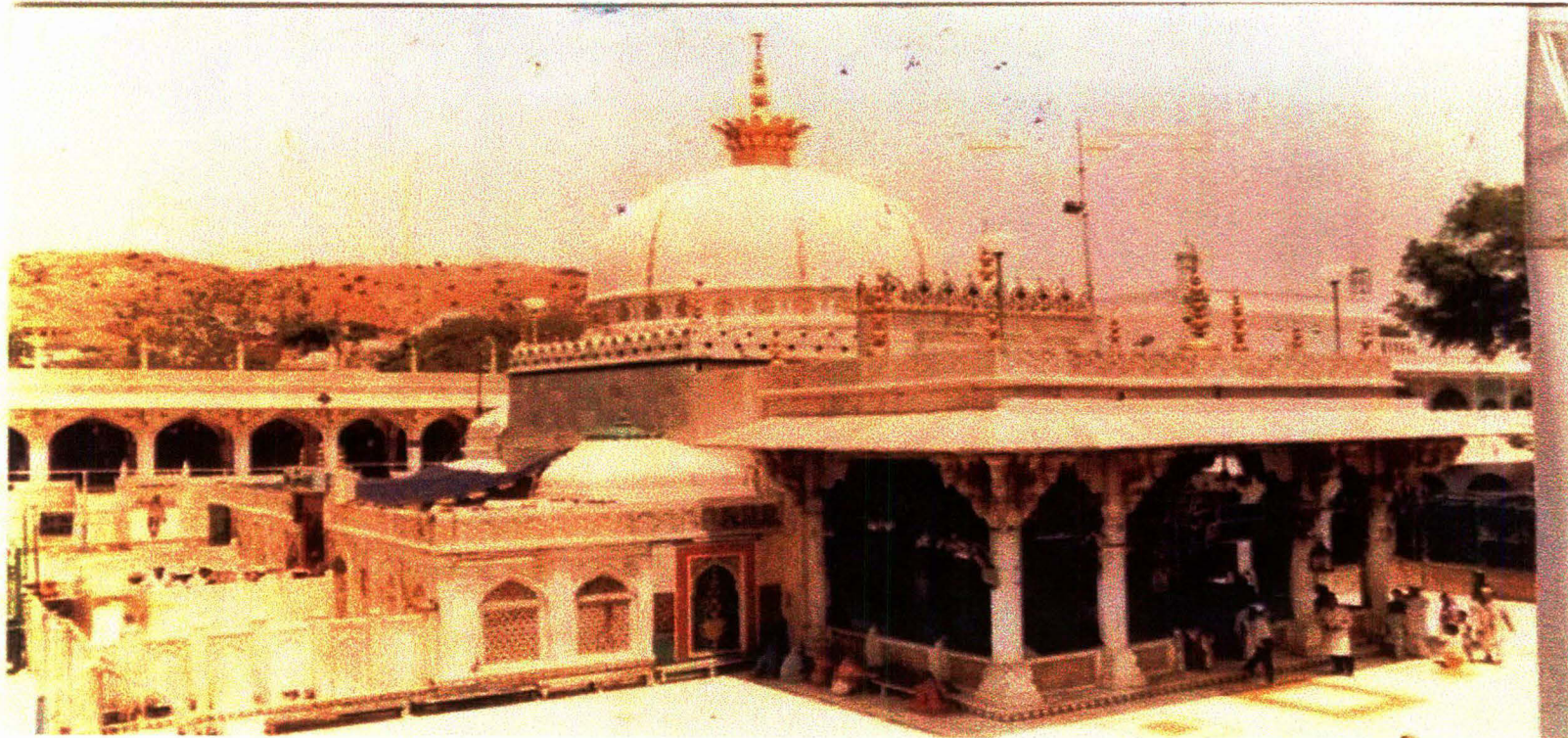




PLATE-IV

*Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Ali al-Hujwiri, popularly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh (d. 1071 A.D. ) and believed to be holding the supreme authority over the Sufis in India. He wrote the famous *Kashf al- Mahjoob*.





**PLATE- V**

*Dargha Sharif* of Shaikh Muin al-din Chishti, the founder of Chishti *silsilah* in India at Ajmer, which is the most celebrated shrine in India.





PLATE – VI

*Mazar sharif of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki at Mehrauli in Delhi.*



#### PLATE- VII

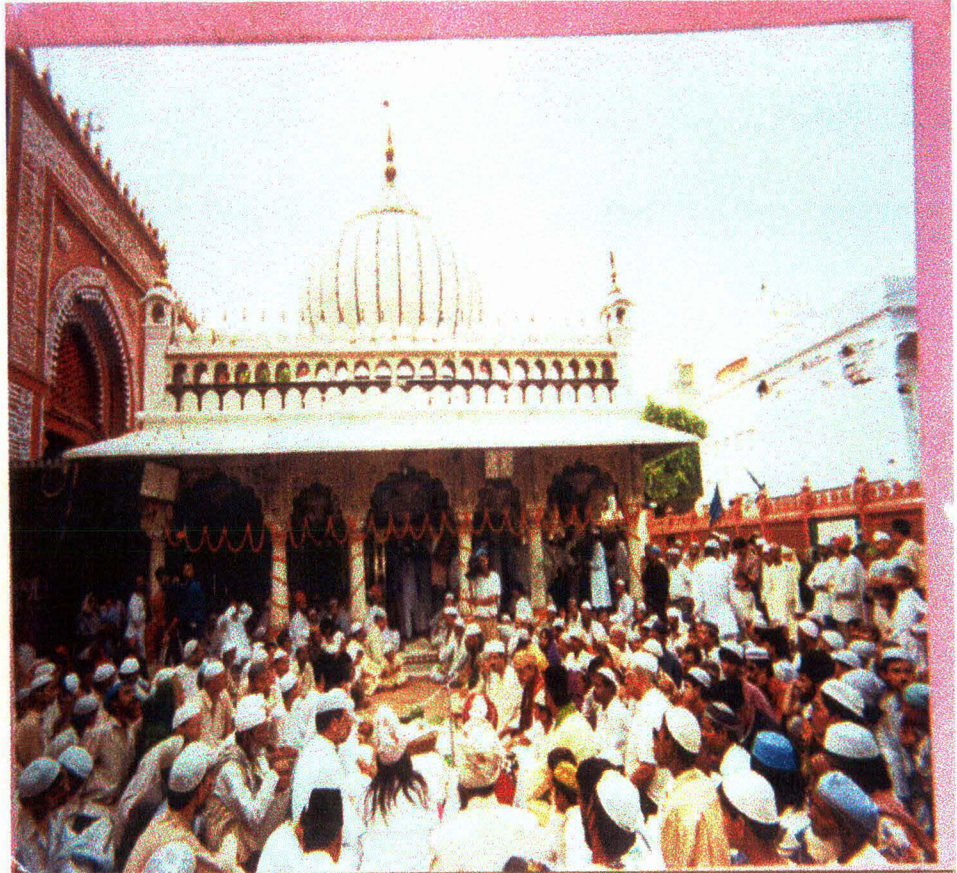
*Dargha Sharif* of Shaikh Farid al-Din Shahr Ganj, popularly known as Baba Farid and the successor of Shaikh Qutub al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, at Pakpattan (Pakistan). The *dargah* contains a '*bihishti darwaza*' i.e. literally 'the gateway to heaven' through which every devotee during *ziyarat* makes a point to pass through.





**PLATE- VIII**

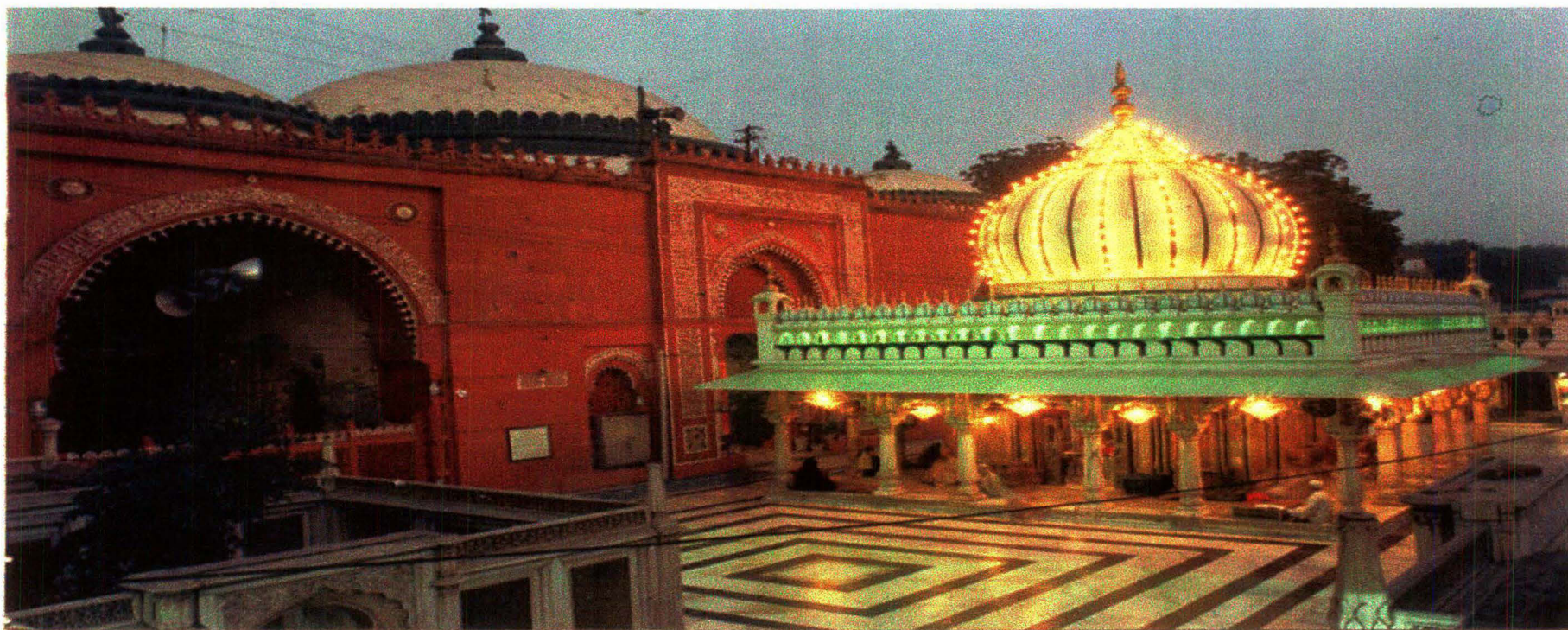
*Dargah Sharif* of Bibi Julaikha, mother of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya at Urdh Chini near Mehrauli in Delhi, which is the most revered shrine of a female Sufi in India.



**PLATE-IX**

*Dargah Sharif of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya at Nizamuddin in Delhi; the devotees are reciting fateha on the eve of Bara wafat i.e. the Prophet's birth day at the dargah.*





**PLATE- X**

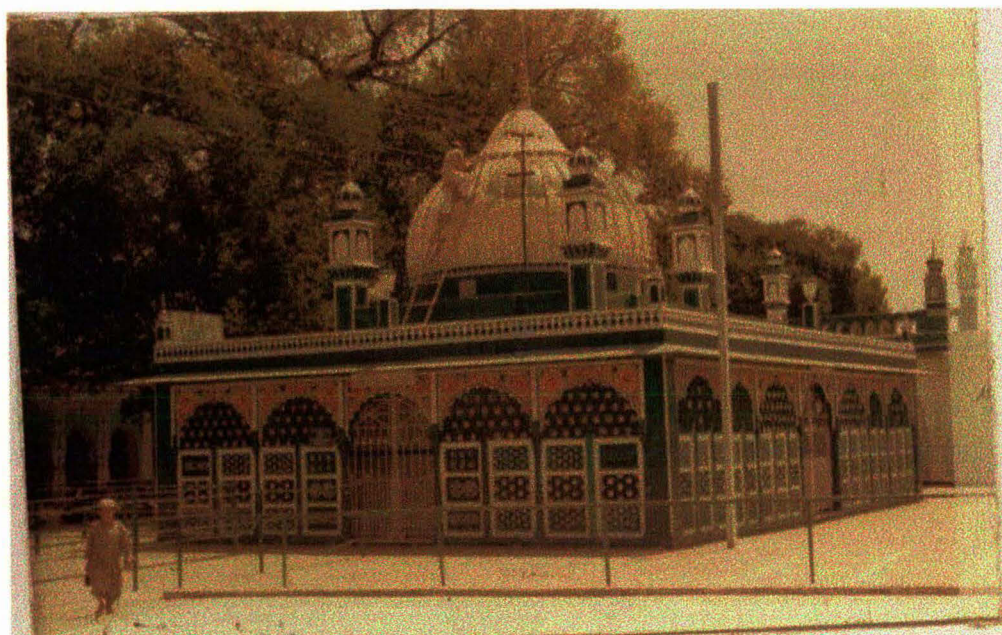
*Dargah Sharif of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya lighted up on a festive night and the Khilji mosque (attributed to have been constructed by the Khiljis) adjacent to the mazar.*





PLATE – XI

Threads can be seen tied up on the screens of the *mazar sharif* of Shakh Nizam al-Din Auliya, which has become a regular practice in most of the dargahs of the Sufis.



**PLATE- XII**

*Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Ala al-Din Sabir, the most popular among the *jalali* Sufis in India, at Piran Kaliar.





**PLATE-XIII**

*Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Amir Khusrau and *Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya at Nizam al-Din in Delhi. It is customary to visit the *mazar* of Shaikh Amir Khusrau before visiting the *mazar* Sharif Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, as he was construed closest to the Shaikh, though a courtier.





**PLATE- XIV**

*Dargah Sharif* of Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i Dehli, the spiritual successor of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, at Chiragh Delhi.



#### PLATE – XV

*Mazar Sharif* of a Shaikh Shams al-Din Atauda at *Pattewali* mosque in Nizamuddin; *Pattewali* means tree in this case (planted by the Shaikh who died in 700 A.H.) the trunk of which reads Mohammad in Arabic (محمد). The Shaikh was contemporary of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. This reflects dual miracle – a tree, planted by the Shaikh more than 700 years before, is still green and contains a trunk that is shaped up to read the Prophet's name.





# **PLATE - XVI**

Jahangir presenting a book to a Sufi (presently at Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.). The emperor is shown to be attaching more importance to a Sufi in the presence of some Kings as shown in the picture.